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THE SUGAR BULLETIN

Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

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The Sugar Bulletin

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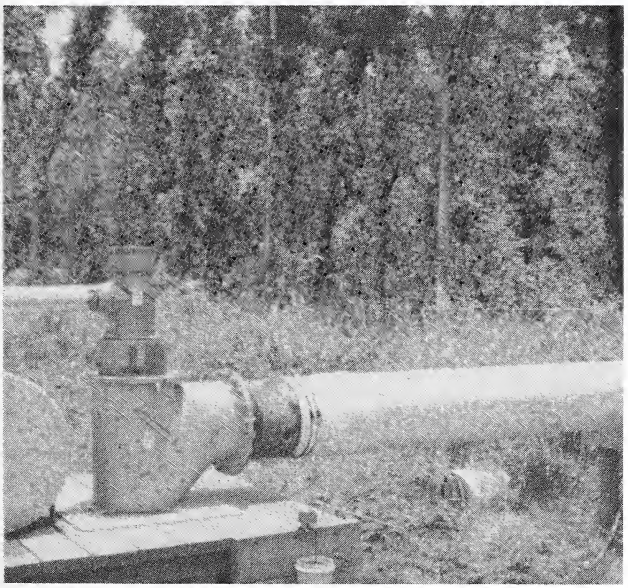

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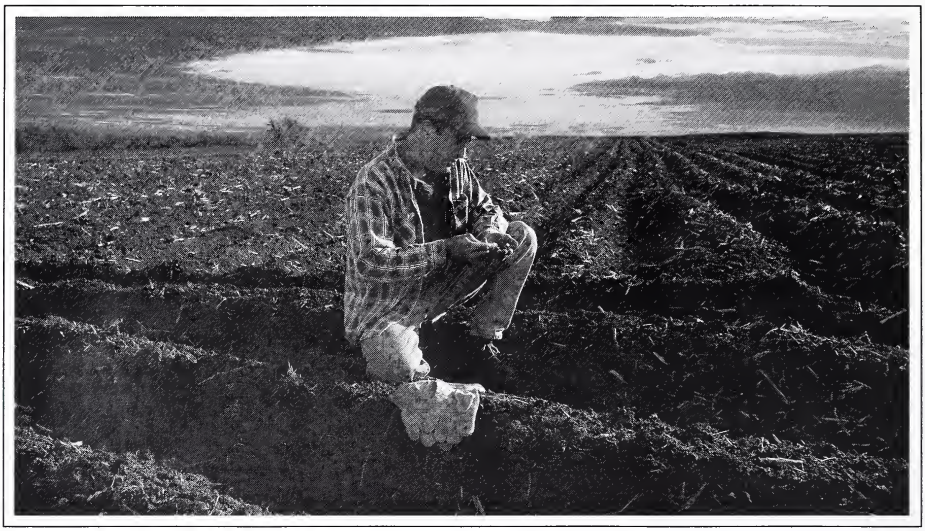

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

Harvest Has Begun
Sugar Association - Seasonal Hauling Permits

I picked up the Morning Advocate this morning (Friday, September 20) to find, on the front page, a picture of a combine moving through the fields in West Baton Rouge Parish. The article was a good one where local people and elected officials were quoted as saying that sugarcane farmers and the haulers have come a long way and were doing a substantially better job these days in burning and keeping the roads cleaner. For those who may take this front page article for granted, please understand that to have a front page spread about something we are doing right is as good as spending thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of dollars in paid advertisement. This does not mean that we have met our goal and are through with doing better. It only means that the citizens of this state are beginning to recognize your efforts and are acknowledging that fact. It also means that all of you who have made the effort deserve the credit. I hope that if you saw the article it brought a smile to your face. YOU DESERVE THE RECOGNITION! You have done well! Please keep up the good effort as it will pay off for all of us for the long run.

Sugar Association

I just returned from the bi-annual meeting of the Sugar Association. Presently, I serve as the Vice Chairman of that national sugar organization. The Sugar Association is a Washington based organization supported by the cane and beet sugar industry and the sugar refiners. All entities in the U.S. sugar industry are not presently participating, but we are striving to get full participation. At this time, approximately 75% (or a bit more) of all sugar sectors are members.

The Sugar Association's main objective is to promote the healthy aspects of our product. We base our arguments on sound science and have achieved respect in the food and nutrition communities for that consistent position. Just yesterday, on my flight home from the Association's meeting, I sat next to a guy who asked me what it was that we put in sugar that made it bad for us? That, I think, might be a good illustration of the work that is necessary to educate the general public of the good qualities of sugar. One on one, it could take centuries to educate the masses that sugar is good and vital to a healthy lifestyle. But, like anything else, in moderation.

As we review the issues that have occupied our daily lives, as sugar people, for the past several years, (Mexico, circumvention, Farm Bill and others) there has been a storm brewing that is just beginning to surface, politically, in Washington. That is the issue of OBESITY! There are those who have been, and are continuing to attack sugar as the cause for obesity, which it is not. Obesity is a physical condition reached by most people who consume more than their necessary daily caloric needs and do very little or nothing to burn off that caloric intake. Easier said would be that most don't do any exercise whatsoever! But, as with any issue or problem, there are those that wish to find someone or something to blame for the "phenomenon." Presently, that is what is

happening. There is also, behind the scenes, a group that stands to gain enormously. That is the ever vigil trial lawyers. I have come to realize that many people think that a lawyer is a lawyer. Well, if you have followed the "Tobacco" class action suits, you will find that a lot of lawyers made a lot of money by suing tobacco companies. In fact, they appear to have made more money that the actual claimants individually received in damages and settlements. If you have read about the suits against McDonalds and other fast food places that sell "fat" food, you might want to begin paying attention to the evolution of this soon to be legal and political issue. Unfortunately, these groups and organizations are using the "shotgun" approach in trying to see on who they might make their accusations stick. Sugar, unfortunately, gets included as one of the targets.

That is where the Sugar Association becomes an important player. Our association bases all statements on sugar in fact and science. The association is trying to gear up to be up-front on this issue and not allow false statements and accusations be made without appropriate response. Additionally, the sugar industry, both beet and cane, are reviewing a planned offensive on sugar's behalf. Like anything else, that will take time and money, and it needs to be done correctly and accurately. I will keep you up to date on that effort as it unfolds. However, the bottom line is that we can't stand by and allow false accusations to be made and not defend our product with the true facts and the science that is behind those facts. The industry is reviewing a strategy to promote the 15 calories per spoonful and the "natural" aspects of our product. Additionally, the Association is formulating a plan that deals with defining "sugar" rather than "sugars" as we continue to get the blame for all "caloric sweeteners" while sugar continues to lose market share.

The League, through the Sugar Association will stay "on point" on these serious potential threats to our product and industry.

Season Hauling Permits

The State Legislative Committee directed me to begin meeting with state and federal staff people to begin drafting legislation for the purpose of maintaining the excess weight limits for our industry. The language being proposed will be somewhat generic in that we will attempt to draft language that will give growers and processors as many options as might be available today, and into the future, to maintain the higher weight limits for sugar cane hauling. When a draft is completed, a meeting of the full committee will be called to review the language and make sure it accomplishes the task and doesn't create new problems. I would hope that such language will be available for review by the committee by late October. This effort will occur, to some extent parallel with an effort on the federal level. The League will keep you posted on the progress.

Keep up the good effort that you have made. Most people are seeing those efforts and are commenting positively on the actions of our industry to do a good job and to maintain good relations with the public. Thanks for your help and support on this and other matters of concern.

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Mexico Dispute Settlement Remains Elusive
Appropriations Breakdown - Marketing Allotments
USDA WASDE September Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The sweetener dispute between the US and Mexico continues to drag on with no clear end in sight. Hopes of reaching agreement between the two governments by Oct 1 seems to have disappeared, and the new target appears to be the end of the calendar year. Jackie Theriot and other Mexico Task Force (MTF) members continue to be actively engaged with Ambassador Allen Johnson, USTR agricultural negotiator and corn refiner interests, as well as Mexican government and sugar industry leaders.

Appropriations Breakdown

The agricultural appropriations bills have been approved by the House and Senate appropriations committees, but have not been approved by either house of Congress and the prospects for quick approval are dim. The appropriations process for all sectors of government spending is far behind schedule, with no appropriations packages having even moved to conference and most still languishing in committee. The House leadership initially sought agreement with the Senate to approve a long-term "continuing resolution" (CR) to keep the government in operation through the remainder of 2002, but the Senate balked at that proposal and short-term CR is likely, followed by a lame-duck session of Congress following the November elections.

The Senate has approved $6 billion in disaster relief for farmers and ranchers, without budgetary offsets, as a part of the Interior appropriations package currently under consideration on the Senate floor, but the House has already completed work on Interior appropriations and has no plans to add disaster funding to that vehicle. Instead, the House leadership is currently reviewing its options and could put together a much smaller disaster package to be included in the continuing resolution later this month. This package would purportedly be in the $3 billion range and would presumably be offset by budgetary reductions in agricultural spending programs.

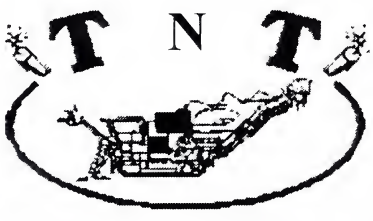
With the various appropriations packages almost certain to be rolled into a CR, typically providing for continued funding for programs at the previous year's funding levels, the likelihood of damaging amendments to the farm bill appears remote at this time. A CR would continue funding for the Houma research station at last year's levels, but we still hope to have the higher funding levels put into an omnibus budget resolution if and when that is approved later this year. While there are no amendments currently expected on the agricultural appropriations packages affecting the sugar program, we will continue to watch these developments closely. Also, the payment limitations issue continues to be discussed as a source of spending for disaster relief and other programming needs.

Marketing Allotments

In late August, the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation announced overall allotments for sugar for the 2002 crop year. The overall allotment quantity was 7.7 million short tons (raw value), with the beet sector receiving a 4.185 million ton allotment and the cane sector receiving 3.515 million tons. Initial allocation estimates were sent to specific mills early in September, but many questioned the accuracy of those estimates and the Department will send out recalculated allocations shortly.

USDA WASDE September Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its September World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 increased by 80,000 short tons (raw value) to 8,445,000 short tons. 2001/02 production was reduced again to 7,954,000 from 8,005,000 tons. Lower yields in Florida resulted in a 20,000 ton reduction in projected cane sugar production for 2002/03 to 4,070,000 tons, while 2001/02 production was dropped to 3,979,000 tons from 4,005,000 tons last month. Beet sugar production is projected at 4,375,000 tons, up from August's 4,275,000 tons. For 2001/02 non-program imports were unchanged at 80,000 and 2002/03 non-program imports are unchanged at 60,000. The 2002/03 total imports estimate was unchanged at 1,542,000 tons. Louisiana cane sugar production for 2001/02 and 2002/03 were unchanged at 1,575,000 short tons and 1,600,000 short tons, respectively. The amount of sugar held by CCC remained unchanged at 218,000 tons. For 2001/02, the stocks-to-use estimate was reduced from August's 17.2 percent to 16.7 percent. Ending stocks rose to 1,672,000 short tons from 1,500,000 short tons last month.



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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Improving Cane Quality

On the way to work this morning, September 17, the air was tented with the sweet smell of molasses and several tractors and trucks were encountered on the road in the process of delivering cane to the mill (Cajun). It is good to see the start of harvest. With the reduction in the amount of sugar that can be sold from the 2002 crop it is very important to produce the crop as economically as possible. The cost of production for the entire crop will be spread out over less sugar. There is the reality of over quota-sugar setting on the floor of the warehouse until it can be sold. After processing, a longer time will be required to get full payment. Efficiency must be gained by both the grower and the miller. The delivery of high quality cane will help improve the efficiency of both the delivery and the processing of cane. If the trash is left in the field and only high quality cane is delivered to the mill, then both operations should run much smoother and decrease production costs. Fresh cane is also very important to both the grower and to the mill. Old, stale cane is a major source of the bacteria that cause the problem of dextran buildup in the factory. With the hot weather during the first part of the harvest, it is very important that chopped cane should be delivered to the mill within twelve hours or less. Make it a goal to deliver as few as possible sleeper-loads. The longer the cane stays in the trailer or wagon the more problems it will cause at the mill. The contamination of one load of very high dextran cane requires many loads of cane containing no dextran to dilute its effect.

In last month's Bulletin, Herman Waguespack reported on cane quality work that was done the previous year at Alma. The data that he reported indicates at least one-step that can be taken to improve the quality of cane being delivered to the mill. In the study, about five tons of material was left in the field, while nearly the same amount of sugar per acre was delivered to the mill. If you did not read his article in last month's Bulletin please do so. In the study the slower speed needed to achieve the highest quality cane deliveries was not economical. The question is then "is there anything else that can be done during harvest, or is there anything that can be done to the combine in an effort to leave all of this non-sugar producing material in the field?" If the non-sugar material is left in the field it will certainly reduce the cost of delivery of cane to the mill and will reduce the cost of processing the cane into sugar.

The good folks of Alma have agreed to cooperate in testing methods of improving cane quality again this year. The goal of the work this year will be improving the quality of delivered cane while maintaining an economical rate of harvest. The plans are to look at higher forward speeds while harvesting (3 – 4 mph) with varying rates for the extractor fan. Because the cane industry is always concerned with losing

the privilege of burning cane, much of the information should be gathered during the harvest of unburned cane. There is a vast amount of knowledge in the industry on the most efficient and least costly method of sending high quality cane to the mill. If there are any suggestions for other needed research into improving the quality of cane delivered to the mill, it is welcomed.

The image of the cane industry during the last couple of harvests has improved. For the 2001 harvest, through your hard work and diligent efforts, the number of complaints about smoke and ash were much fewer than the previous year. This is a reminder that every precaution should be made in an effort to maintain this good image. The better neighbor the industry is the longer the **privilege** of burning will be retained. Continue with the good neighbor policy by following the BMP's which were taught in the "Burn Certification School." Take time to reacquaint yourself with the information that was provided during the classes. If you cannot find a copy of the material that was used during the course, contact your county agent or the League office for a copy of the information.

With the dry weather of the last week or so, many growers have completed their 2002 planting. However, other growers have not been so lucky. Some areas of the cane belt have been wet all summer long. Because of the abundant rain, try as they might, growers in areas with the almost nonstop rain were not able to plant any cane until after September 12. As one looks at the radar today, it is dotted with many scattered rain showers, the kind that can drop an inch of rain in thirty minutes or less. Indications are however, that the number of growers who will not finish their planting until after their mill has started will be less this year than last year.

This year there are only ten varieties being replanted in outfield tests. The number of replants this fall is down somewhat from previous years. There are several reasons for the fewer varieties being replanted in outfield tests. Better testing procedures account for a portion of the reduction. Tests in the early stage of the program (infield tests) are now being planted at several locations within the industry and not just at the LSU and USDA stations. The size of these plots have been increased and are now harvested with combine harvesters.

With computers, the good and bad characteristics of potential parent varieties can be entered into the crossing list. This allows the breeders to make the best crosses possible and increases the probability of getting desirable characteristics. But, no matter how scientific the method of parental selection for crossing nor irrespective of how carefully the crosses are made, there are years when nearly all of the selections for that year are dropped early in the program. They may be dropped for a number of reasons which include but are not limited to; lack of disease resistance, low yield (tons of cane per acre, sugar per ton of cane), or poor stubbling ability.

Late in the selection program, as a variety is planted to more locations some fault may be found in the variety that has not been noted before, such as lack of smut resistance and/or the intolerance to herbicides. A good example of this occurred this year with L 98-207. At the 2002 meeting of the Variety Advancement Committee two varieties in the '98 series (L 98-207 and L 98-209) were advanced to the next stage of the program. Both varieties were to be planted in outfield tests and replanted on primary increase stations. L 98-207 was the more promising of the two varieties, with yields in test fields higher than LCP 85-384. At one of the primary stations during high winds of a thunderstorm the cane broke. The tops of the stalks did not break, but the stalk itself broke in the middle about two or three feet above the top of the row. As was stated early, 207 was the most promising of the two varieties.

As most secondary stations are replanting HoCP 96-540 they are somewhat surprised by the very good planting ratios. Most are reporting ratios of ten to one, while some are reporting ratios better than twelve to one. It is hoped that the yield data collected for this variety in second stubble outfield tests this year will be as outstanding as it has been in plant cane and first stubble. The industry needs another variety that can take over some of the acreage occupied by 384.

The distribution of L 97-128 to the secondary

stations was accomplished without any problems. Most of the secondary station operators were well pleased with the quality of the cane.

As was stated in last month's article the variety Ho 95-988 was brought back to active variety status and was to be replanted on the primary stations. Due to high levels of smut, the variety was dropped in 2000, and for that reason, only second stubble was available for replanting at these stations. In an effort to assure that the best quality and disease free seed will be distributed to the secondary stations next year, samples were taken from the seed to be planted. The samples were tested for RSD at the LSU RSD Testing Lab. A total of 200 stalks were collected from the second stubble seed plots at two secondary stations and were tested. These two stations were used as the original seed source for the cane distribution to secondary stations. Of the 200 samples tested none tested positive for RSD. In addition to the testing, all of the seed planted for distribution to secondary stations next year was Hot-Water-Treated. The treatment was given to the seed in an effort to make sure the seed planted this fall was free of RSD and smut.

We would like to thank all of the folks from USDA for their cooperation; picking up the variety at primary and returning it to the primaries, the use of their unit and for assisting in the treatment of the seed. Both Mike Robichaux and Bobby Judice from Frank Martin Farms in Franklin, LA provided the same outstanding cooperation by the treatment of the seed cane for the Teche.

Early in this article, the LSU- RSD Testing Lab, which is run by Dr. Hoy, was mentioned. It is the time of year when Dr. Hoy puts out a request for samples from growers, county agents, and crop consultants. There is no cost for running samples through the lab, half of the cost to maintain this lab is supported by the American Sugar Cane League. The other half comes from fees charged to seed companies for testing and for supplying a source of disease free seed for micropropagation. Dr. Hoy goes into more detail in his article that is in this issue of the Bulletin.

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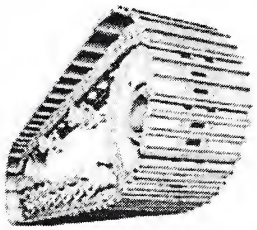

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Cane Sugar Mill - Chemical Manufacturer

Chemical manufacturers including petroleum refiners are regularly reviled in the news media, and accused by environmentalists of causing most of the real and imaginary health and environmental problems in the world today. The fact that these industries have produced the chemicals, plastics and pharmaceuticals that have nearly eliminated most of the diseases plaguing western civilization, extended life spans, greatly improved environmental conditions and raised living standards to previously unknown levels goes unappreciated. And yet, beginning about a half century ago, our state government has actively pursued chemical manufacturers, asking them to locate here to take advantage of Louisiana's abundant water supply, access to inland and ocean transportation and natural gas resources, hoping thereby to provide good paying job opportunities and significant tax base where these desirable conditions were once mostly absent. Now, even the politicians, in public at least, treat chemical manufacturers as a pariah.

In the situation described above, one might naively assume that the making of a necessary food product from sugar cane, which has been at the base of the local economy for over 200 years, would surely not be so reviled. However, as every sugar miller knows, all of the environmental regulations applicable to chemical manufacturers, including the malicious, punitive and tax assessing ones, apply also to cane sugar millers and refiners. In fact, cane sugar mills are specifically identified as "chemical manufacturer" in the Federal Regulations. Furthermore, the sugar industry does not get any better treatment in the news media.

Regulations of the U.S. Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA), specifically 29 CFR 1910, defines chemical manufacturer as any employer in SIC Codes 20 through 39 where chemical(s) are produced. In this regulation, "chemical" means any element, chemical compound or mixture of elements and/or compounds. Everything, including food, is therefore a chemical. Cane sugar mills have a SIC Code beginning with a 20, actually 2061, so sugar mills are "chemical manufacturers" and must comply with these regulations.

Because sugar mills do not produce highly hazardous chemicals, the 29 CFR 1910 regulations are really not that difficult for sugar mills to handle. The basic requirement, 1910.1200 Hazard Communication, requires a sugar mill to obtain or develop a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) listing all of the appropriate procedures for handling and storing each of the hazardous chemicals the plant uses or produces. Thus, if a sugar mill uses hazardous materials such as chlorine or caustic soda, it must obtain MSDS sheets for each of these chemicals from the supplier and ascertain that any exposed employees are fully informed and are familiar with the MSDS. Also, because sugar mill products are "hazardous" in certain circumstances such as smothering or drowning in the product, and may be allergenic to certain sensitive individuals, sugar mills must provide

MSDS forms for each of the products the mill produces and give these MSDS forms to all customers. It's the law!

The sugar mill products needing an MSDS include but are not limited to:

Raw cane sugar
Syrups and molasses
Bagasse

Draft copies of MSDS forms for these products which are applicable to the typical Louisiana sugar mill are available at the American Sugar Cane League office.

Recently an additional MSDS was added to the League's inventory of available MSDS in a draft format. This additional MSDS draft form is for another product of sugar mills - the ash from the burning of bagasse. Because this product contains the mineral nutrients for vegetation, ash is desired by knowledgeable nurserymen and landscapers. Bagasse ash also has some other useful chemical and physical properties. All bagasse ash that cannot otherwise be sold should be returned to cane fields in order to improve next years' cane crop. However, ash can be "dusty" and therefore is theoretically hazardous – hence product users must be provided with an MSDS by the producing sugar mill.

There is a good reason for placing emphasis on the word "product" in the preceding paragraph. Products are things that should never be wasted (i.e. discarded). If sugar mill products are wasted, in the eyes of the law, environmentalists and the news media, sugar mills would then become generators of "chemical manufacturing waste" and subject to punitive state and Federal rules, fees and taxes that the industry simply cannot afford. The cane sugar industry needs to continue and improve the by-product management system documented a decade ago, and aggressively seek new and improved markets for these products, products which should never be wasted because these can be beneficially reused by returning to the canefields from whence originated. That is a related subject that should be discussed here in more detail in the near future.

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THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

Super Cargo Airport - Senate Race

For over a quarter of a century there has been big talk of a big airport in southeast Louisiana but until recently no one knew where the project was going to land. Airport developers have picked their spot and it is right in the middle of some Donaldsonville area sugarcane fields, much to the chagrin of some League members.

There is serious doubt that a project of this size can be done by private investors in spite of assurances from Governor Foster that these people have the deep pockets required. Many feel that Federal and State money will have to be used to reach the $1.7 billion budget estimated to construct the 25,000 acre airport.

South Louisiana would be one of the most attractive places in the U.S. to build an enormous air cargo port with our superior river ports, railroad trunk lines and interstate highway system leading to all the population centers of the continent, but 25,000 acres of sugar is quite a sacrifice. World trade is already established through Houston, Miami and New York but the Louisiana Airport Authority thinks this project can successfully lure trade to Louisiana. The FAA thinks enough of the project to fund over $4 million in studies.

There is broad speculation that the developers have seriously underestimated the problems they could face with environmental permits. One informed source says the permits could take as much time to obtain as the developers have allocated for the whole process. And there is also the economic malaise most world markets are suffering which could make private money even harder to raise.

Senate Race

So far, the sexiest thing about the U.S. Senate race was the interest that Governor Mike Foster showed in the event. Incumbent Mary Landrieu seems secure in most polls taken of public opinion but the Foster idea could have changed things. Foster ultimately decided to stay out of the race as a candidate and instead endorse one of the other Republicans, Rep. John Cooksey.

There are no Democratic challengers but on the Republican side there are Cooksey, the first to declare, State Rep Tony Perkins and Elections Commissioner Suzie Haik Terrell.

Perkins is from the Baton Rouge area and will count on his statewide base of support in the conservative religious community to garner enough votes to get Landrieu into a runoff. Terrell is the only candidate, except Landrieu, who has been elected statewide and she hopes to pull enough New Orleans votes off the incumbent to push her into a runoff.

The Republican strategy is to get enough candidates into the race who can pull selected votes away from Landrieu and leave her short of a primary victory. The popular notion is that an incumbent in a runoff is an incumbent in trouble. Stay tuned.

MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

The Effects of Soil in Cane Delivered to the Mill And Options for Dealing With It

Soil in cane is not measured directly in most sugar industries, because it is not easy to do. However, it has a very significant effect on a sugar mill's costs, and so it is an important issue in the cost of production of sugar and the productivity of the industry as a whole.

The cane payment system in Louisiana and in many other industries is based on the recoverability of product sugar from the cane. In an earlier article in the Sugar Bulletin addressing the options for cane payment formulae (December 2001), I noted that an additional issue relating to cane quality, namely soil in cane, needs to be taken into account in an effective cane payment system. Dextran also needs to be dealt with separately, but that is a subject for another day.

The purpose of this article is to highlight the adverse effect that soil in cane has on milling costs, and to look at the options for how it can be incorporated in a cane quality payment scheme. In doing so, the fundamental rationale must be kept in mind, namely the need to reduce the overall cost of production of sugar, when considering both sections, growing and processing, together. If this results in one sector reducing its costs and the other increasing its costs, a re distribution of proceeds must be considered.

Measurement of Soil in Cane

All non soluble solids in cane are defined as fiber and so soil in cane is regarded for analytical purposes as cane fiber. The sediment measured in the core press analysis is used only to ensure that fiber in cane is correctly calculated according to this definition. Indeed, when cane samples are extremely muddy, no juice at all is expressed in the press, and so sediment is clearly not representative of soil in cane.

The only analytical method that can give a reliable measure of soil in cane is ash analysis. This is an indirect measure of soil in cane and also includes the ash naturally in the cane stalk of about 0.7%, which has to be subtracted from the measurement to give the soil ash. Unfortunately it is a lengthy analysis.

Measurements made at Cinclare last year as part of the project investigating NIR for direct cane analysis showed figures of ash % cane varying between 0.7% and 32% (Madsen et al, 2002). The average was 3.1%, but the median was only 1.7%. Thus for most of the time, the ash level is not much different from what is obtained in other industries that do not have cane washing plants. But it was clear that when muddy cane was processed, ash numbers over 5% were often obtained, which inflated the average.

Effect of Soil on Milling Costs

Excessive soil in cane affects the cost of maintenance, leads to increased loss of sugar, reduces the capacity of the mill, reduces the output of the boilers and leads to higher usage of supplementary fuels.

The existence of cane washing plants in

Louisiana mills is, in a way, a license to growers to deliver soil in cane. It says to the growers that the mill is set up to handle soil in cane, so there is no necessity to worry too much about it. Unfortunately, the washing plants remove less than 50% of the soil on average (Birkett, 2001), and the loss of sugar in washwater is considerable. With the current move to keep washing to a minimum to reduce losses of sugar, soil in consignments of cane may well be regarded more seriously.

The problems experienced by the mill as a result of soil in cane can be itemized as follows:

- Excessive wear on cane preparation equipment.
- Need to maintain a costly cane washing plant.
- Excessive loss of sugar from cane during washing.
- Wear on mill rolls, requiring additional roll roughening to prevent slipping and maintain throughput.
- Higher loss of sugar in bagasse.
- Higher production of filter cake, increasing the loss of sugar in cake.
- Greater pressure on filter station capacity.
- Additional wear on intercarriers and bagasse carriers.
- Increased wear in boilers, made worse by the need to increase excess air.
- Higher usage of gas in the boilers to maintain boiler output.

Some years ago, a survey was undertaken in South African mills to assess the cost of soil in cane. The answers received from the various mills were all quite consistent. Their numbers showed that reducing ash % cane by 1 unit could reduce milling costs by about 0.24 US cents/lb sugar. This represented about 10% of total milling costs. Total elimination of soil in cane would double the saving. In Australia it has been reported that annual maintenance costs attributable to soil in cane are estimated to average US $1.4 million per year for each Australian factory (Purchase & deBeer, 1999). This represents on average 0.38 US cents/lb sugar. Taking into account additional sugar losses and the higher cost structure in the US, the cost of excessive soil in cane is likely to be significantly higher in Louisiana. It would be interesting to hear from Louisiana processors what they think soil in cane costs them.

What can be done?

If there were easy solutions, they would already have been implemented. The first requirement is to recognize that soil in cane has a serious impact on the profitability of the industry, and as such there should be a provision made in the cane payment scheme for consideration of ash. This should probably be a bonus/penalty system, with the magnitude of the bonus/penalty related to actual costs or benefits in the Louisiana context. In this respect a study on how much excessive soil in cane is costing Louisiana mills should be undertaken.

The second requirement is to attempt to measure soil in cane. This has a cost associated with it, but a small cost in relation to the potential benefit. More serious perhaps is how to get a representative sample with a core sampler, particularly when a large part of the soil arrives in the form of a clod of earth at the base of a stalk.

Until some method of measurement is in place, we cannot begin to attack the problem. As it stands at present, there is little incentive for the grower to worry about soil in cane, because it is not acknowledged as a quality parameter in the payment system. Soil or ash in cane should be measured and incorporated as a quality parameter. In this respect the adoption of NIR analysis of cane in the future provides a convenient means of quantifying soil in cane (Madsen et al., 2002).

In times of heavy rain, it may be necessary to suspend the soil bonus/penalty system, or preferably change the limits of the penalty/bonus system so that growers are not penalized unfairly.

Conclusion

Soil in cane is costing the Louisiana industry millions of dollars per year. Reducing production costs by reducing the soil in cane is an issue that can only be solved at the grower/processor interface.

An industry study undertaken in Australia has recently been published (Milford, 2002). Among other things, it makes the following statements:

- "The biggest problems were seen to be the flat rate/ton cane charged by harvesters and the narrow range of parameters that are measured in cane. Both of these make it difficult to adjust rewards in relation to quality or performance. Interviewees expressed the need for measurement of new parameters in cane, as well as the need to improve current analyses and set up reward systems involving others currently measured."
- "One outcome of the development of partnerships is interdependence, which can mitigate power imbalance through the "paradox of power" and through which efficiencies arise."

The issue of soil in cane is one that needs to be addressed by growers and processors in partnership, with a view to reducing the overall cost of production. The real effect on costs in Louisiana needs to be evaluated. A system of measurement needs to be instituted and an arrangement devised which will lead to lower cost sugar in the future.

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Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2001.

Precision Management of Sugarcane using Variable Rate Fertilizer Application. Dr. Richard M. Johnson, Research Agronomist, Dr. Edward P. Richard, Jr., Supervisory Research Agronomist,USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA

Soil properties were mapped from large producer fields in Schriever and White Castle, Louisiana. The fallow fields were soil sampled using conventional and grid sampling techniques. For the conventional method, samples were a composite from random locations within the field. Grid sampling was conducted on 1- and 2.5-acre grids using GPS-based equipment. Fertilizer requirements were calculated and application maps were constructed for both fields. Both locations exhibited sufficient variability in soil pH, phosphorus, and potassium levels to economically justify variable rate application of lime, phosphorus, and potassium. The influence of the observed soil variability on sugarcane yield will be investigated in mapping experiments conducted in 2002 at these locations.

Yield mapping experiments were conducted in 2001 at the Rebecca Plantation in Schriever, LA and the Gralynn Plantation in Patoutville, LA. The site at Rebecca Plantation was in plant cane and the site in Patoutville was in 4th stubble. Yield maps developed indicated that significant variability was present in both fields with ranges of 16 to 60 T/A for Rebecca and 14 to 51 T/A for Gralynn. These sites will be soil sampled and mapped to further investigate the relations between yield and soil properties.

Upgrade and Support for Juice Quality Laboratory at the Ardoyne Farm. Ed Richard, Jr., Research Leader/Location Coordinator, USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA

The Juice Quality Laboratory at the USDA-ARS Ardoyne Research Farm can process up to 400 crusher and prebreaker/core press juice samples per day. Automation of the lab has increased the efficiency of technicians by minimizing errors during data entry and transcription and provides a data base for statistical analyses for the for the 10 to 15 Federal, State, cooperator, and industry scientists who use the facility. This information is critical to the overall success of the breeding and selection, genetics, pathology, entomology, weed management, cultural practices, and processing research being conducted for this industry. With funds provided by the Dedicated Funding Committee an oven was purchased and installed in 2001. The new oven was very valuable in the processing of more than 5,500 samples during the 2001 harvest.

On-Going Multi-Disciplinary Research at the USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Unit. Ed Richard, Research Leader/Location Coordinator,Edwis Dufrene, Agronomist, Donnie Garrison, Agronomist, Michael Grisham, Research Patholgist' Richard Johnson, Research Agronomist, Yong-Bao Pan, Research Plant Molecular Geneticist, Tom Tew, Research Geneticist, John Veremis, Research Geneticist, William White, Research Entomologist;USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA

The mission of the federally funded SRU is to conduct basic and applied research that will increase sugarcane production efficiency while minimizing the impact of the crop's culture on the fragile

ecosystems of the Mississippi Delta. To address this mission the Unit has under one roof agronomists, breeders, entomologists, molecular geneticists, pathologists, and a weed scientist who are developing improved sugarcane cultivars through conventional and molecular breeding techniques and developing management strategies that allow the culture of these cultivars at reduced costs, hasten their maturation and sugar accumulation, and combat a constantly evolving pest complex.

Listed below are some of the project that were conducted during 2001:

A. Breeding:
   1. Breeding for general adaptability of new high yielding sugarcane varieties (HoCP 96-540 in advanced stages of outfield testing).
   2. Successful demonstration of small (½ gal.) pots instead of large (20-gal.) containers to grow parents at Houma will increase the capabilities of making basic crosses in 2002 without increasing facility size.
   3. HoCP 91-555 flowered for the first time as a result of being grown in small pots, and was used as a parent in 12 crosses at Houma (Commercial and Basic Breeding implications).
   4. Photoperiod capacity doubled by using a fiberglass-reinforced polyethylene fabric to cause darkness within an already-existing glasshouse, allowing a record number of crosses to be achieved in 2001.
   5. Developed protocols for the insertion of foreign genes. Liberty-resistant sugarcane in the greenhouse.
   6. Variety specific markers have been identified which should allow the industry to establish some possession control of its varieties as well make the selection process more effective.

B. Pathology/Entomology:
   1. The presence or absence of RSD, Leaf Scald, and YLS using various diagnostic techniques was determined on over 500 clones (1500 assays).
   2. A reference population of selfed LCP 85-384 was established in the field to look for variations in disease and sugarcane borer resistance.
   3. *Cotesia* populations increased in commercial fields and predation of the sugarcane borer was significant in 2001. Overwintering capabilities of *Cotesia* will be assessed in 2002 and a final decision on the feasibility of using this insect should be made following the 2002 harvest season.

C. Weed Control/Cultural Practices:
   1. Command® received a full label for use in sugarcane as a preemergence treatment for the control of bermudagrass and other grass weeds. Spartan® received Section 18 label for morningglory control. K-4® was tested and evaluated for crop injury and weed control.
   2. Two new herbicides (Valor and CGA 362622) were evaluated for postemergence weed control in sugarcane.
   3. Command® received a full label for use in sugarcane as a preemergence treatment for the control of bermudagrass and other grass weeds. Spartan® received Section 18 label for morningglory control. K-4 tested and evaluated for crop injury and weed control. Two new herbicides (Valor and CGA 362622) evaluated for postemergence weed control in sugarcane.
   4. Recommendations for the handling of trash blankets following the combine harvesting of green cane developed.
   5. Alternatives to Polado® were evaluated and studies will be expanded in 2002. The influence of a Polado® application on regrowth the following year in the presence of the trash blanket is also being considered.

Economic Analysis of Sugarcane Production in Louisiana. Michael E. Salassi, Associate Professor, Dept. of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness, LSU Agricultural Center, Baton Rouge, LA

Research results published in 2001.

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[*Article discussing methodologies for estimating the value an existing sugarcane cane crop throughout the crop production cycle*]

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[*Summary of economic sugarcane research published in issue highlighting LSU Agricultural Center sugarcane research*]

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Can You Afford to Ignore RSD?

Jeff Hoy, Lori Grelen, and Jane Paccamonti
Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology Department
LSU AgCenter

Ratoon stunting disease (RSD) reduced yields and profits in the Louisiana sugarcane industry for many, many years. In the last five years, the impact of RSD has been greatly reduced through the widespread planting of LCP 85-384 (a variety with some resistance to RSD spread) and use of healthy seedcane produced through micropropagation (primarily Kleentek®). The resistance to RSD spread that LCP 85-384 possesses was an extra benefit of this variety. With its outstanding yield potential, it would have been released whether it was resistant or not, and it has become the dominant variety in the industry because of yield not RSD resistance. It is risky to grow only one variety, but the fact is that it has greatly helped to control what was our most important disease. In addition, the availability of certified, healthy seedcane has been an important factor contributing to RSD control. Certified seedcane is the result of a public and private sector partnership involving a commercial seedcane company (Kleentek), the LSU AgCenter, and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry. The certification standards were developed with extensive industry input for the protection of the industry.

The average RSD infection level for stalks within infected fields was less than 1% during 2001, and the average frequency of fields with some level of RSD infection was 7%. This means there was little or no effect of RSD on yield during 2001. These numbers are in contrast to stalk and field infection levels of 22 and 59%, respectively, during 1986 and 12 and 52% during 1997. However, if RSD is still occurring on a farm, even at a low level, it still has the potential to cause a problem in the future. RSD was detected on 16% of the farms tested during 2001 compared to 51% in 1997. This is a major improvement, but it means that RSD is continuing to persist on a lot of farms.

The breeding program is focused on coming up with new varieties with the same yield potential as LCP 85-384. RSD control can be accomplished on the farm, so any experimental varieties that are susceptible to RSD but have excellent yield potential will be released to the industry in the future. It will be up to the growers to keep them healthy. We already have one highly susceptible variety being grown, HoCP 91-555. Care needs to be taken not to expose it to RSD because the disease will spread rapidly and cause severe yield loss if it becomes infected.

The fact that RSD causes no visible external symptoms makes monitoring an important component of a successful control program. Monitoring is now possible through the Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab which completed its fifth year of RSD testing during 2001. RSD testing was conducted in 276 commercial fields on 81 farms during 2001. The additional lab functions of RSD testing for the LSUAC Variety Selection Program, the ASCL Variety Release Program, Kleentek seedcane sources, and the local quarantine to provide healthy plant material for micropropagation of seedcane were continued. A summary of all RSD testing is shown in Table 1. Every stalk of cane planted at the Primary Stations of the ASCL Variety Release Program is obtained from a heat-treated nursery and then tested for RSD before planting. Additional testing is then performed on samples collected from

some Secondary Stations as a variety nears release. The lab provides an independent assessment of the RSD status of Kleentek seedcane sources, and RSD has never been detected in the Kleentek seedcane production system.

In addition, the Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab continued testing Kleentek seedcane sources for a new virus, sugarcane yellow leaf virus. This virus can be spread by aphids, so sanitation procedures will not keep it out. Over 3,000 samples were collected and tested. The virus was detected in some fields. When a virus infection problem was detected, no seedcane was sold from that field. The impact of this virus on the industry is still uncertain. This testing is being done at the request of Kleentek, and stopping sales of cane from infected fields is a cautionary measure being taken voluntarily for the protection of the industry.

The majority of commercial fields tested (74%) were LCP 85-384. Only 5% of these fields had any RSD infection. In contrast, 16% of the CP 70-321 fields tested and 10% of the HoCP 91-555 fields had RSD. These numbers illustrate the resistance of LCP 85-384 to infection. This resistance to spread of RSD may lead some farmers to conclude that they do not need to be as careful about their healthy seedcane program as they were before. This would be a great mistake. Farmers need to maintain aggressive healthy seedcane programs to eliminate RSD from their farms and then keep it out. This will enable us to grow RSD susceptible varieties in the future and prevent a return to the situation we had before. RSD is not blown around by wind or spread by insects. Once you are clear of it, your farm will stay that way unless you re-introduce it in infected seedcane.

To take advantage of the RSD testing program contact your county agent or consultant. They can advise you on what to sample, and they will collect the samples for delivery to the lab. There will be no charge from the lab for testing. Twenty stalks will be collected across the end of a field. Each sample consists of the lowest full joint (one internode with intact nodes on each side). We will be happy to check any field you want to have tested. The Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab is providing an independent assessment of the RSD status of Kleentek seedcane. Certification and annual RSD testing together provide assurance that you are starting out healthy with Kleentek seedcane. Testing older stubble fields of cane intended for the mill will make sure your healthy seedcane did not become infected on the farm. This "quality control" approach checks the cane at the end of the healthy seedcane pipeline and insures that the time and money spent on a healthy seedcane program are not being wasted. There is no reason not to test for RSD. Farmers need to take the initiative. Call your County Agent or consultant, and let them know you would like to have cane on your farm tested. We strongly urge everyone to use a healthy seedcane program and take advantage of the testing program to make sure RSD does not cause a problem on their farms now or in the future.

Table 1. RSD testing summary for 2001.

Source	Location	No. of fields	No. of varieties	No. of stalks
Louisiana growers	State-wide	276	5	5472
LSUAC	St. Gabriel and Iberia	-	-	390
Variety Release Program	1° and 2° Stations	-	14	797
Kleentek	Foundation stock	-	3	20
Kleentek	1° increase farms	22	4	449
Kleentek	2° increase farms	19	3	539
Local Quarantine	LSUAC	-	9	38
Research	LSUAC	-	7	200
Totals		317		7905

Louisiana
Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting

All growers should have attended the Certified Burn Manager Program. The list below are the steps you must take when burning.

Step 1. Identify Smoke Sensitive Areas
Step 2. Obtain Fire Weather Forecast
Step 3. Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan
Step 4. Determine Smoke Category Day
Step 5. Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance
Step 6. Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume
Step 7. Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

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S89

Hurricanes And Cane Mexico

This past month was not a good one for Louisiana. Much rain, followed first by Tropical Storm Isadore and then Hurricane Lili. I guess the old expression of "adding insult to injury" might apply to this one- two punch that the state received. While each storm was different in certain ways, such as more rain than wind in Isadore and more wind than rain in Lili, both proved to be damaging to property and crops. And, not just for this year's crop and harvest, but in many instances next year and the year after as plant cane remained underwater in many of the coastal parishes and in some outlying parishes that were unfortunate enough to be in the path of these two storms.

If there is something to be grateful for after such events I guess we all should be thankful for the loss of force suffered by Lili prior to its landfall in South and West Louisiana. Had we truly received the "early" estimated category 4-5 storm, I am afraid there would have been a need for many body bags in the affected areas. This is not to say that the impact of these natural phenomenons is not painful as it is, but just to acknowledge that we did dodge a potential "killer" storm. Someone upstairs was apparently listening to prayers coming from South Louisiana. And for those prayers we should be grateful.

Even though the storm was not totally catastrophic, it did leave its signature throughout the area through which it passed. Abbeville and surrounding communities were left in much disarray. And, as you ride or fly the country side, you will see fields of sugar cane that have been laid flat, twisted by the changing direction of the winds, pulled from the ground, and top leaves shredded; not to mention the many fields left submerged by tidal surges and continuing rains.

No one at this time can put an actual dollar estimate or calculate the losses for this and subsequent crops. We will know more finitely the extent of damage as we progress through the harvest and await the spring emergence of what we hope will be a good crop in the next year(s). Time, as always, will be the teller of how we fared, individually and collectively.

There are stories such as the losses to crops, houses and equipment of Antoine and Bozo Luke on Bayou Sale, the Blanchard boys and other farmers in the Lydia and Cypremort Point area, and others in the affected path of the storm. It is not pretty and it can be very disheartening to stand helpless against such a powerful and natural occurrence the likes of Lili. Our prayers go out to all growers who suffered losses and to all other citizens in those same communities.

Charles Thibaut and I traveled to Washington on October 16 and 17 to meet with members of the Louisiana Congressional Delegation about Disaster Assistance. I should report to you that the entire delegation stands ready to play their necessary roles in trying to bring federal aid to you in anyway that is allowed by law. They and their staffs were very understanding and cooperative. I wish to thank Senators Breaux and Landrieu, Congressmen Tauzin, John, Jefferson, Vitter, Baker, McCrery and Cooksy and their capable staffers. The League and our delegation will be monitoring legislative

initiatives over the next several months in hopes that a legislative instrument will become available for us to attach proper and effective language to address these disaster situations in the cane belt.

In the meantime, if you feel that you need some assistance, please contact the FEMA authorities in your respective parishes. If you do not have the phone number or contact person with FEMA, you should be able to get that information from your local police jury or parish president/council offices. As for crop disaster, there is presently not much readily available, but I encourage you to register with the proper authorities while the League continues to work on addressing Louisiana's situation. We will keep the industry posted as we move forward on any and all available assistance mechanisms.

Mexico

There have been many "non-confirmed" reports coming from Mexico on resolution to the NAFTA caused dispute on sugar and now, high fructose corn syrup. At one point in time the U.S. sugar industry, in consultation with the Mexican sugar industry, felt we were close to finding resolve to the matter. Since then, other groups have managed to complicate what could have been and should be a negotiation between the two countries' "sugar" industries. But, as often happens, some seek opportunities at the expense of others and that it might be said is what has caused our two countries' negotiators to have to step back from the negotiating table for a while. Unless something changes soon, I don't see a resolve during this calendar year (2002). Our industry refuses to accept an agreement that is harmful to our industry but beneficial to theirs. In short, there is no "good" deal that is acceptable unless both parties leave the table happy or both leave feeling each didn't get a good deal. We will not give away our market, nor its access at the expense of Louisiana and American sugar farmers.

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Mexico Dispute Continues
League Officials visit Capitol Hill re Hurricanes/Disaster
USDA WASDE October Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The US industry's Mexico Task Force in October continued meetings with USTR agricultural negotiator, Allen Johnson, regarding the ongoing sweetener negotiations with Mexico. The latest indications are that the pressure to reach agreement before President Bush's planned trip to Mexico in late October has been reduced and technical level discussions will continue over the coming months. MTF members were encouraged by strong signs that the US negotiators are utilizing information and expertise provided by the US industry. Additional meetings are tentatively scheduled for late October, when Johnson returns from meetings in Africa and South America.

The Administration has also indicated that it feels no pressure to announce a Tariff Rate Quota for Mexico given the ongoing negotiations and the recent indications that Mexico may not have surplus stocks for exporting, due in large part to the increased domestic demand resulting from the maintenance of the soda tax on high fructose corn syrup.

League Officials visit Capitol Hill re Hurricanes/Disaster

Charlie Melancon and Charles Thibaut traveled to Washington, DC in mid October for a round of meetings with the Louisiana congressional delegation to discuss the impact of Tropical Storm Isadore and Hurricane Lili on sugarcane production and processing activities in Louisiana. During the meetings, the League urged staff and Members to remember sugarcane losses when considering disaster assistance.

The approval of a continuing budget resolution (CR) in mid October represents a temporary setback for efforts to approve the agricultural appropriations package and the disaster assistance package. The CR will keep the government running through the November elections. While Congress remains technically in session, the reality is that little substantive work will be done until after the elections. Congress is likely to return for a lame duck session in the week of November 11 and appropriators are hopeful that the intervening time will allow them to put together appropriations packages for several of the governmental agencies and programs, including agriculture.

The Senate had approved $6 billion in disaster relief for farmers and ranchers, without budgetary offsets, as a part of the Interior appropriations package, but the full Senate failed to approve the bill. In the House, there were rumors of a smaller disaster package being prepared, but the disaster assistance effort was effectively stymied by the Administration's insistence that any such spending be offset by

cuts in other programming. The delay until after the elections does not bode well for the relief effort. The tight elections in many agricultural regions of the US provided some momentum for the effort, but a delay until after those elections could dampen interest in acting on a disaster package in late November. We will, however, continue to monitor those efforts in hopes that Congress will return with a renewed sense of urgency to provide much needed assistance to areas hit by adverse weather disasters.

USDA WASDE October Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its October World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 remains at 8,445,000 short tons (raw value). 2001/02 production was left at 7,954,000 tons. Cane and Beet production estimates also remained 2002/03 at 4,070,000 tons (2001/02 remains at 3,979,000 tons) and 4,375,000 tons (2001/02 increased by 80,000 to 3,975,000 duty to company reported revisions), respectively. For 2001/02 non program imports were increased by 5,000 to 85,000 and 2002/03 non program imports are unchanged at 60,000. The 2002/03 total imports estimate was increased to 1,565,000 from 1,542,000 tons in September. Louisiana cane sugar production for 2001/02 and 2002/03 were unchanged at 1,575,000 short tons and 1,600,000 short tons, respectively. The amount of 2001/02 sugar held by CCC was lowered 5,000 to 213,000 tons. Ending stocks fell to 1,658,000 short tons from 1,672,000 last month. Imports under the tariff rate quota (TRQ) are increased due to the waiver issued to allow entry of 23,000 tons of Mexico's 2001/02 quota in the 2002/03 fiscal year (See FAS news release 0363 02). The year ending stocks to use ratio is 15.5 percent, compared with 15.4 percent last month. For 2001/02, the stocks to use estimate was reduced slightly from September to 16.6 percent.

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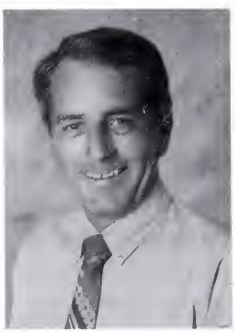

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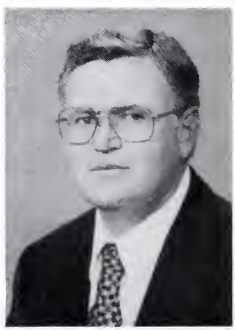

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Variety Program

Over the last couple of months questions of the need for the American Sugar Cane League's seed increase program have arisen. Also, there are questions about the whole makeup of the variety release program. The program is too complicated to answer all of the questions in one article. Upcoming articles will touch on the many different aspects of the variety program and the 3-Way Agreement between LSU, the USDA and the ASCL. This article attempts to answer some of the questions about the way in which things are done in an effort to provide the industry with healthy seed of new and improved varieties.

One of the first questions that has arisen is about the quality (amount of RSD) of seed released from secondary stations. At one time the amount of RSD on the secondary stations may have been very high. Please note the "may have been," for at that time there was no simple and reliable test for the disease; therefore, the seed was not being tested. During the early eighties a more reliable test for RSD was thought to have been developed, Fluorescence Microscopy. This was a relatively simple and definite test for the presence or absence of RSD in a stalk of cane. As the testing method was further evaluated, it seemed to be very reliable. It was tested on samples from field-run cane and the results all appeared to be very encouraging. Researchers were very excited by having a method by which they could test and screen varieties coming through the breeding program for disease spread, and more easily evaluate the amount of cane infected within the industry. With the new testing procedure the economic value of losses could also be evaluated.

In an effort to determine the quality of the seed being grown on the ASCL primary and secondary stations, a survey was conducted of primary and secondary stations. CP 76-331 was on the secondary stations at that time. In the testing data for plant cane, none of the secondary stations along the Mississippi River or along Bayou Lafourche tested positive for any of the samples collected on August 13, 1984. However, a large number of secondary stations along the Teche tested positive for RSD for samples collected on the somewhat later date of September 5, 1984. The same secondary stations were retested as first stubble on September 13 - 16, 1985. Again the Mississippi River Stations tested negative. In the first stubble of CP 76-331 along the Bayou Teche more stations were found to have RSD and the number of stalks with the disease had increased. Likewise some of the secondary stations tested along Bayou Lafourche were now showing positive RSD results.

The next logical step in testing the procedure was to start testing large fields of field-run cane. Many different fields were tested, including fields of direct Kleentek seed. Many of the samples tested came back positive, and this included the direct Kleentek seed fields. Knowing that seed cane coming from Kleentek was free from RSD, researchers began to question the reliability of this testing method. After additional testing of the procedure it was found that the fluorescence microscopy test for RSD gave too many false positives to be reliable. As the new data was collected, it indicated that the false positives were given when the cane stalk tested was under stress from the lack of water.

The lack of water could be from lack of rainfall or it could come from the dry conditions associated with quarter drains.

Since that time, a number of testing methods have been evaluated and have been proven reliable for use in; commercial fields for estimation of infection, the variety breeding program, and disease-free seed projects.

The original survey of the ASCL secondary stations indicated a need for changes in the program. One of the conclusions drawn from the '83 and '84 survey of the secondary stations was that seed of new varieties was being infected at the primary stations. This may or may not have been true, for at that time, the infection level of the seed coming to the primary stations was unknown. The introductions (new varieties which are planted for the first time) to the primary stations were not tested for RSD because there was no reliable method of testing. The amount of seed of any new variety is limited and it was felt that the process of heat-treating would greatly reduce the amount of seed of a new variety available for planting in tests and for introduction to outfield tests and primary stations. Also at the time growers still had the ability to heat-treat cane for disease-free seed plots. Knowing that most growers would heat-treat seed of a new variety from the secondary stations, no effort was made to rid introductions to the primary stations of any RSD which they may have picked up. It was also felt because seed sources coming from the breeding stations were always from plant cane fields and that the seed was cut before the field was harvested, that there should be no spread of RSD into the seed. The new, easy, and reliable testing methods for RSD allowed each of the fifteen to twenty stalks of a new variety that was being planted to the primary station to be screened before it was planted. The standard procedure for each new variety going to the primary stations is, that the stalks which are to be planted are tied into bundles and tagged with their variety number. The next step is to number the bottom two joints of each stalk in a bundle with a permanent marker. After numbering, the bottom joint is then removed and tested for the presence of RSD. To prevent the spread of RSD from one infected stalk to other stalks, the loping shears are flame-sterilized after cutting each stalk. During the testing the variety and stalk number are recorded, if a stalk tests positive for RSD it is discarded and not planted in the introduction plots at the primary station.

During the first few years of testing seed that came from the breeding stations, a relatively high number of stalks tested positive for RSD. It was also found that there was the possibility of only one of the primary stations receiving infected seed. In some instances three or four of the twenty stalks to be planted at one primary station would test positive and there would be no RSD found in the other two sets of introductions.

In an effort to further improve the likelihood of the seed going to the primary stations being free of RSD, all varieties in the program are now HWT (hot water treated) the year before their possible introduction to primary stations and outfield tests. After the incorporation of this procedure into the seed increase program, for the last five years, there have been no positive tests for RSD in seed coming from the breeding stations. There have been a few results which have come back questionable, so as not to take any chance of planting RSD infected seed, the stalks that were indicated as possibly being infected were not planted.

When seed is increased on the primary station, sanitary procedures are followed. The introductory seed plots are cut by hand, with the cane knives being sterilized between each variety. For those varieties that are cut mechanically, in an effort to prevent the spread of disease and the planting of mixtures, the harvester is disinfected and cleaned of all cane pieces in between each variety. The variety HoCP 91-555 came through these procedures. Data indicated that HoCP 91-555 was highly susceptible to RSD and that the disease spread very rapidly in it. For these reasons, in the fall of 2000 on the primary stations, fields of plant-cane, first-stubble, second-stubble, third-stubble, and one fourth-stubble were sampled for RSD. Additionally two secondary stations were also sampled for RSD. Of the nearly 200 stalks tested only one tested positive for RSD. At varying stages of increase, as varieties are replanted on the primary, and the year a variety is sent to the secondary stations a small number of stalks are

tested for RSD. During the fall of 2002 the League's agronomists, with the cooperation of researchers from LSU and the USDA, will conduct an even more extensive survey for RSD at the primary and secondary stations.

LCP 85-384 has proven to be resistant to the spread of RSD. Additionally growers are taking advantage of disease-free seed, which is available from commercial seed companies, resulting in a low amount of RSD found in the industry as well as the primary and secondary stations.

As testing methods improve their reliability, in an effort to release the highest quality seed of new varieties possible from the secondary stations, they will be incorporated into the seed increase program. Not only has the amount of RSD infected seed coming from the secondary stations decreased, but it will continue to do so.

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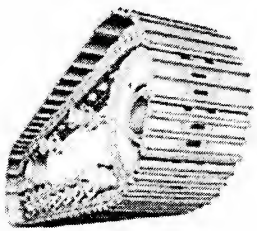

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Agricultural - Crops Residues Management

The past decade has been witness to a significant increase in cane sugar production at individual Louisiana farms and at the mills processing sugar cane. Concurrently, there has been a change in the amount and characteristics of incidental residues produced, due primarily to changes in cane varieties planted, harvesting techniques and to mill consolidations and expansions. It is especially important in the current operating environment that these residue assets be managed in a lawful and responsible manner to prevent wastage resulting in unaffordable fees, taxes, and fines.

About 10 years ago, a group of predatory and/or ill informed individuals at the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) sought to declare all agricultural and silvicultural residues including cane tops and leaves as "solid waste" subject to taxation, permit and operating fees, disposal fees, transportation fees, etc. under the regulations then being redrafted. While the stated purpose of the then proposed regulations was compliance with "Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA)," a more obvious motive was raising money, and bureaucrats at LDEQ have an insatiable appetite for your money. Bagasse, for instance, could thereby be taxed by the ton and bagasse boilers regulated and taxed as waste incinerators instead of being praised for what these are actually - renewable energy (resource conservation and recovery) facilities that do not cause "global warning."

The perpetrators of this anti-agriculture initiative ignored a specific provision of RCRA that a material is not a "waste" of any kind unless, and until, it is "discarded" or thrown away. With the current price of natural gas and fuel oil, a sugar mill operator would be crazy to "waste" bagasse and not use it for boiler fuel. However, when faced with the opposition of the entire agriculture community, including that of the League's Environmental Committee, a compromise was reached in the LDEQ Solid Waste Regulations whereby "agricultural - crop residues ..... stored, processed or disposed of .....in accordance with a best management practices plan ..... approved in writing by Department of Agriculture ....." are excepted from the regulation. Although such agricultural crop residues are not subject to LDEQ's solid waste regulations, these regulations do persist in referring to these residuals as "waste," which under the Federal law they are <u>not</u> unless they are "discarded."

In 1994, best management practices (BMPs) were developed and approved for dealing with residuals on sugar cane farms. Each farmer is responsible for having a residuals BMP compliance plan in effect, and keeping this plan current with any changing situation at the farm. In view of the changes in farming practices since 1994, these plans should be carefully reviewed and adjusted if necessary to avoid conflict with the LDEQ regulations.

Dealing with residuals at a sugar mill is obviously a much larger and more complicated undertaking. However, farmers play a key role

since the mill management concept involves returning to the farms any residuals that cannot be marketed or otherwise beneficially used. The muds, bagasse ash, scrap cane and other beneficial residuals are thereby returned to the soil, preserving and enhancing long term farm productivity.

Each Louisiana sugar mill is required to maintain an individual Best Management Practices Plan that is approved by the Louisiana Department of Agriculture. A model plan for a typical mill was developed in 1994 by the American Sugar Cane League and is available at the League offices. Individual mills prepared plans tailored to local situations and submitted them for approval prior to the 1994 processing season, and were approved by the Department of Agriculture. In view of the changing situation since 1994, it is urgent that these plans be updated to ascertain full compliance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. This industry cannot afford to "waste" anything!

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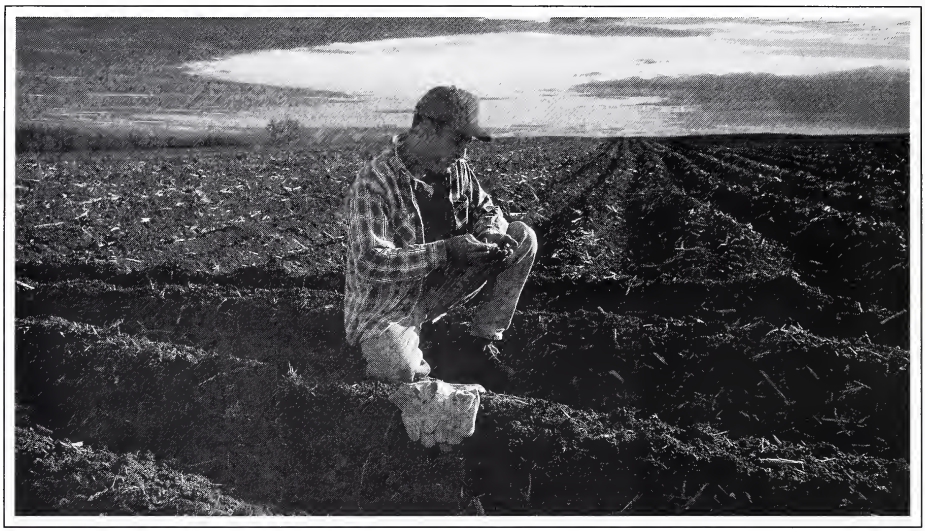

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THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

D.A. Drops Some Charges Against Odom
The Race for U.S. Senate

The Baton Rouge district attorney made some major moves recently in the investigation and trial of Agriculture Commissioner Bob Odom. The prosecutors failed to get a judge to agree to more time for trial preparation so they dropped all charges against a lobbyist who is allegedly connected to Odom's situation and they dropped 11 of 21 charges against Odom. The lobbyist, Lehmann Williamson, is expected to be charged again after Odom's trial. But if Odom is found innocent of the charges the picture could change for Williamson.

Legal eagles and other chronic court watchers are speculating that the district attorney's office doesn't have much of a case against the Commissioner. Although they dropped one bribery count they still accuse Odom of taking a $30,000 bribe from a warehouse owner, improper use of a department airplane, and of forcing department employees to do some private work for family members.

The Race for U.S. Senate

Senator Mary Landrieu, caught in an expensive fight for her young political life, has emerged from a fierce Republican advertising blitz with a slim lead. Her own pollster shows Landrieu with 51% in mid-October. That same poll shows challenger Suzie Terrell ahead of retiring Congressman John Cooksey, with state representative Tony Perkins running fourth. A month ago Landrieu showed 54%.

Sources in Terrell's camp dispute those numbers. They say Mary is under 50% and losing strength. Cooksey and Perkins are expected to make a final advertising push during the last two weeks. Terrell has lots of GOP bucks and has paused her advertising only for the recent local elections to avoid confusing voters going to the polls and looking, but not finding her name.

Landrieu recently picked up the endorsement of the Sheriff's Association which may indicate that the "court house crowd" will help her get out the vote.

Cooksey has the endorsement of Governor Mike Foster and Perkins has the support of the religious right.

The American Sugar Cane League now has a website.

www.amscl.org

MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Michael Saska
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

Comments on Juice Clarification Practice in Louisiana

Of the principal goals for juice clarification, viz. reduction of suspended and dissolved (non-sugar) components in raw juice and prevention by neutralization with lime of sucrose loss from inversion after the juice has been heated, the latter is frequently unattained at Louisiana mills. Process pH (pH at process temperature) as low as 5.1 to 5.3 for clarified juice and factory syrup are seen frequently. Direct detection or even quantification of sucrose loss to inversion is beyond the means of an average factory laboratory and the reduced sugar recovery is obscured by lack of accurate sugar balance in most mills. This sugar loss is therefore largely invisible to the mills, and yet is real and substantial. Based on literature, the estimated sugar loss can reach as high as 3% or 5 lb per ton of cane, or more.

Approximate sucrose loss, as % total sucrose per hour in clarifiers, as a function of process pH of clarified juice [1,2].

Process pH	5.0	5.5	6.0	6.5
Sucrose loss % total per 1 hour	3	1	0.3	0.1

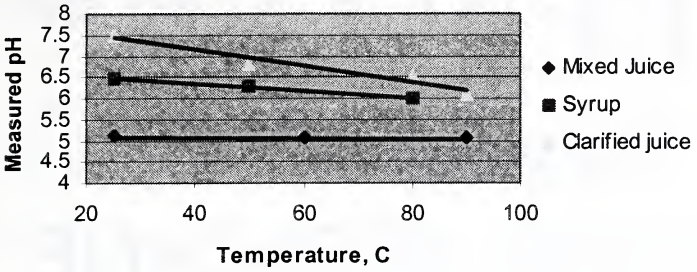
Approximate sucrose loss, as % total, in the evaporator station, as a function of process pH of syrup[1,2].

	5.0	5.5	6.0	6.5
Sucrose loss % total	1	0.3	0.1	0.0

The combined loss in a 1 hr retention time clarifier and the evaporation station, at process pH of 5.5 may amount to $5,000 per day in lost revenue and as high as $16,000 per day at process pH of 5.0.

Surprisingly, the process pH values of clarified juice and syrup are not routinely measured by the mills, and the pH that is measured at ambient temperature and recorded by the mill laboratories provides an inaccurate and even a misleading picture of the process conditions. Measurements by ASI personnel on factory samples agree well with the previous work of Schaffler[3] and others. Even

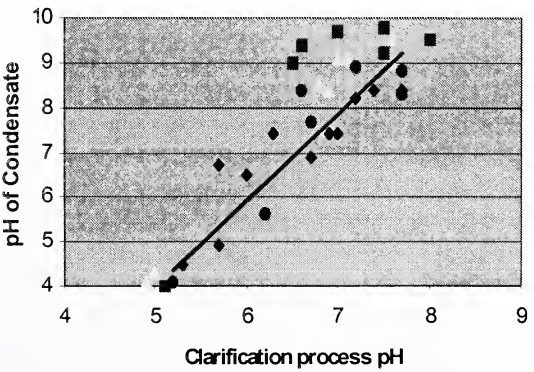
an apparently high pH clarified juice illustrated in the figure is quite acidic under process conditions. At a clarified juice pH of 6.1 to 6.3, which is frequently seen at some mills, the process conditions are highly acidic and must lead to the extensive sucrose losses to the extent indicated above.



Lower settling velocity is sometimes reported when liming to a higher pH and is one of the reasons given by the mills for keeping the pH low. The phosphate levels in raw juice measured at ASI last year and during October 2002 indicate relatively low levels, in the 200 – 250 mg/ L range of P_2O_5 in mixed juice. This, combined with high levels of aconitic acid, which yield relatively soluble calcium salts at the conditions of juice clarification, may be too low for efficient clarification. Occasional addition of phosphoric acid or phosphates is a common practice in other parts of the world and should be tested if the settling velocity is unacceptable at such pH levels that would yield clarified juice close to the process pH of 7. Optimization of flocculant type and dose should always be considered.

Another alleged problem associated with liming to higher pH levels is a higher level of calcium in clarified juice and the expected adverse effects on evaporator scaling. On average, doubling of calcium content from liming clarification with respect to raw juice was seen in the 2001 ASI tests, but the effect on scaling may not be straightforward, because higher pH also leads to higher elimination in clarification of phosphates, oxalates and silicates. An alternative to liming clarification sometimes mentioned in older literature is the use of soda ash, either alone or in combination with lime. A 30 % calcium reduction with respect to raw juice was seen in the 2001 tests with soda ash as compared to doubling of calcium levels in liming. Pilot tests in one of the mills are being planned in 2002 when larger volumes of syrup will be prepared for sugar boiling and molasses exhaustion tests at ASI to study the effects of full or partial replacement of lime with soda ash on sucrose recovery.

Lastly, higher pH in clarification was shown in the 2001 ASI tests to result in higher pH evaporator condensates. This was explained as a combination of lower volatility of acetic acid and higher rate of glutamine degradation (source of ammonia) at higher pH levels. Conversely, observation at the mills of occasionally low pH acidic condensates from the evaporators and the associated corrosion problems is thought to be related to the frequent low process pH levels in the industry.



[1]K.J. Parker, in Cane Sugar Handbook, 12th Edition, J.C.P. Chen and C.C.Chou, Editors, p. 634, 1993.
[2]B.S. Purchase, C.M.J. Day-Lewis and K. J. Schaffler, proc. 61st SASTA, p. 8, 1987.
[3]K.J. Schaffler, Proc. 61st SASTA, p. 14, 1987.

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Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2001.

Assessment Of Different Threshold Levels Affecting Insecticide Use To Control The Sugarcane Borer. T. E. Reagan, Dept. of Entomology, LAES/LSU Ag Center, Baton Rouge, LA, Mike Salassi, Dept. of Agric. Economics LAES/LSU AgCenter, Baton Rouge, LA, W.H. White, USDA ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Unit, Houma, LA

In a randomized complete block experiment with four replications and four management treatment regimes were setup on each of four varieties planted in the fall of 2000 at the St. Gabriel Sugar Research Station, St. Gabriel, La. The work conducted in 2001 (continuation in 2002) was designed to assess SCB injury, potential area wide moth production, and yield loss of resistant and susceptible varieties under different levels of pest management. The variables were the four commercially grown sugarcane varieties in Louisiana, (1) SCB resistant (CP70 321, HoCP85 845) and susceptible varieties (LCP85 384, HoCP91 555) and (2) four regimes of SCB insecticidal control (based on 5% and/or 10% larval SCB infestation thresholds).

SCB larval infestations were monitored weekly with leaf sheath sampling, and the three row plots (0.01 acre) were treated when infestation levels reached the designated threshold levels set by the different treatment regimes. Confirm®, (Dow AgroSciences, Indianapolis, IN 46268) with the surfactant Latron® CS 7 (Dow AgroSciences, Indianapolis, IN 46268) was tank mixed at the rate of 6 oz/Acre and 0.25% vol/vol, respectively. All three rows per plot were treated using a CO_2 sprayer mounted on an all terrain vehicle. The spray boom covering 2 rows on one side and one row on the other contained one flat fan spray nozzle per six feet of row width at 10 GPA and 35 psi. Infestations were assessed on the two outside rows, while the integrity of the center row was preserved for yield evaluation. In addition, due to enhanced experimental variability caused by naturally occurring arthropod predation, especially from fire ants, two applications of the soil pesticide chlorpyrifos (Lorsban®, Dow AgroSciences, Indianapolis, IN 46268) were broadcast for arthropod predator suppression at the soil level. Data collected included number of dead hearts per acre (sugarcane shoots killed by SCB larvae); percent SCB bored internodes, SCB adult moth emergence, and yield loss. Due to the problems growers faced with late season SCB infestations in 2001, each individual stalk sample in 2002 will be divided into two samples (lower and upper part of the stalk) and processed separately for yield in order to help determine the value of protecting the sugarcane crop at different times during the growing season.

Weed Control Research in Sugarcane. James L. Griffin, Curtis A. Jones, Research Associate, Department of Agronomy, Jonathan D. Siebert, Research Associate, Department of Agronomy

For the 2001 growing season research was conducted at the St. Gabriel Research Station and Ben Hur Research Farm, and at off station sites in East Baton Rouge, St. James, and St. Martin parishes. Research has primarily concentrated on evaluation of herbicides after planting, in the spring, at layby, after layby over the top of cane, and in fallow fields. This report summarizes our research information for 2001.

Sugarcane Response to Herbicides Applied in Spring and at Layby

An experiment was conducted to evaluate response of three sugarcane varieties, LCP 85-384, HOCP 85-845, and LCP 82-89, to the herbicides CGA 362622, Valor, and Velpar K4 (a premix of Velpar and Karmex). A Prowl + Karmex spring treatment followed by Prowl at layby was included as a standard for comparison. Averaged across herbicide treatments injury tended to be less for LCP 85 384. Sugarcane yield was at least 25% greater for 384 than for the other varieties. Sugar yield was 20% greater for 384 than for 845 and 32% greater for 384 than for 82-89. Averaged across varieties injury was greater than 30% where CGA 362622 was applied twice and 17% when Valor was applied twice. Injury for these treatments was accompanied by a reduction in sugarcane plant height in mid July compared with the Prowl + Karmex standard. Sugarcane yield was reduced compared with the standard 8.2 to 19% where Velpar K4 or CGA 362622 was applied twice. Sugar yield was reduced 9 to 21% when Velpar K4, CGA 362622, or Valor was applied twice. Results clearly show that multiple applications of some of the newer herbicides can be detrimental to sugarcane growth and yield and that the effect is not variety dependent.

In another experiment significant injury was observed for Valor applied April 12 (20%), but injury for the same rate applied April 4 was 7%. Application of Regiment on April 12 injured sugarcane 44%. Injury was no more than 14% for the Velpar K4 treatments. For the May 29 rating date, sugarcane was injured when Valor was applied 27 days earlier (28%) and when Valor was applied twice on April 4 and at layby on May 16 (25%). Sugarcane injury at the May rating was 78% where Regiment was applied in mid April. Sugarcane yield and sugar yield were significantly reduced when Valor was applied postemergence, but not for the Velpar K4 treatments. The excessive injury observed with Regiment resulted in a sugar yield reduction of 36% compared with the standard.

Sugarcane Seed Response to 2,4 D Application Timing

2,4 D was applied 7, 5, 3, and 1 week before harvest of seed cane for planting. Both whole stalks and billets were planted and the seeding rate was maintained constant. Shoot populations of LCP 85-384 the following spring and sugarcane and sugar yields regardless of planting method were reduced when 2,4 D was applied within 5 weeks before harvest. Also, yields were greater where sugarcane was billet planted. Preliminary results indicate that the negative effect due to 2,4 D timing may not occur, however, when a commercial seeding rate is used in a billet system.

Itchgrass Research

Five experiments were conducted to evaluate itchgrass control using herbicides applied either in the spring or at layby. In all these experiments itchgrass did not emerge at a sufficient population to make weed control assessments. Command whether applied alone or in combination with other herbicides to emerged sugarcane in late March caused significant injury. Velpar K4 caused some early discoloration but cane was able to rapidly recover. Sugarcane was not injured when Spartan was applied alone. In layby experiements sugarcane height varied from 12 to 20 inches and it was impossible to direct the spray underneath the crop canopy. Consequently, crop injury was greater on the shorter plants where herbicide contacted the younger leaves in the terminals. Initial injury from Command, Velpar K4, and Valor was observed but sugarcane was able to recover.

Bermudagrass Research

In these experiments bermudagrass covered around 20% of the row top and was actively growing when herbicide treatments were applied on March 22. Suppression of bermudagrass growth as well as crop injury occurred with Gramoxone Max plus Milestone and Command + Karmex. Results clearly indicated, as has been shown in past research, that the currently labeled herbicides are ineffective when applied in the spring to actively growing bermudagrass.

Johnsongrass Research

Asulox applied alone and in combination with Prowl, CGA 362622, Velpar K4, and Regiment were evaluated for johnsongrass control and sugarcane response. At the time of application johnsongrass was as tall as 24 inches and some plants were in the boot stage. By 33 days after treatment, johnsongrass was controlled 69 to 78% with Asulox at the high rate alone and with Prowl at 1 or 4 quarts per acre, and with Asulox at the low rate (3 quarts per acre) with Prowl at 4 quarts per acre. At the high rates CGA 362622 controlled johnsongrass 75% and Regiment 46% 33 days after treatment. Both CGA 362622 and Regiment caused reddening/purpling of the foliage, stunting, and either no seed head emergence or abnormal seed head emergence. Sugarcane injury was not observed for any of the Asulox treatments, but was 18 and 29% for the high rates of CGA 362622 and Regiment, respectively.

Another test was conducted to evaluate johnsongrass control with Asulox applied alone and with Prowl. Rates of Asulox included 2, 3, and 4 quarts/A with 4 quarts/A being the labeled rate. Prowl was applied at 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4 quarts/A. Agridex crop oil concentrate at 1% (volume/volume) was added to all treatments. For the second rating date 71 days after treatment, johnsongrass control with Asulox was 68, 76, and 86% for the 2, 3, and 4 quart/A rates, respectively. Prowl applied with Asulox at 2 quarts/A controlled johsongrass 69 to 75%. However, when the rate of Asulox was increased to 3 quarts/A, control was 88 to 90% when at least 2 quarts/A of Prowl was added. The combination of Asulox at 3 quarts/A plus Prowl at 2 quarts/A controlled johnsongrass equal to Asulox applied alone at 4 quarts/A. These two herbicides applied together could allow for a reduction in the use rate of Asulox along with some residual weed control.

Johnsongrass control was also evaluated for Asulox and CGA 362622 applied alone and in combination. Rates of Asulox included 1/2, 1, 2, and 4 quarts/A with 4 quarts/A being the labeled rate. CGA 362622 was applied at 0.007 and 0.141 lb/A. For the second rating date 71 days after treatment, johnsongrass control with Asulox was 5, 28, 50, and 87% for the 1/2, 1, 2, and 4 quarts/A rates, respectively. Control was no more than 46% for CGA 362622. However, when CGA 362622 was applied at 0.007 lb/A with Asulox at 2 quarts/A johnsongrass was controlled 80%. When the CGA 362622 rate was increased to 0.0141 lb/A and Asulox was applied at 2 quarts/A johnsongrass was controlled 92%. This level of control is comparable to that obtained with Asulox applied alone at 4 quarts/A. A combination of CGA 362622 and Asulox may be advantageous if CGA 362622 is labeled for use in sugarcane.

Red Morningglory Biology Research

Red morningglory germinated and grew aggressively under a 90% shade environment. The control failures observed with atrazine applied at layby may be related to germination of red morningglory later in the season when herbicide concentration in soil is insufficient for control.

2,4 D Alternatives Research

Use of 2,4-D for late season red morningglory control is prohibited in some parishes. Valor and Spartan were very effective in controlling red morningglory with 24 inch runners when herbicide covered the weed foliage. In a later study when morningglory was 72 inches tall and herbicide was applied to the lower 18 inches, Spartan provided excellent control 28 days after treatment. When applied overtop, Weedmaster at 1 quart/A and 2,4-D at 1 pint/A plus 0.5 or 1 pint/A of Weedmaster controlled 72-inch tall red morningglory equal to 2,4-D at 1 quart/A (94%).

Membership Update

The American Sugar Cane League takes pride in communicating with the members of the League. With the changing technology in computers and the internet, many of you now have e-mail addresses that we are not aware of or may have a new address that you have not changed. Besides the printing of The Sugar Bulletin, we often send out e-mail updates.

If you would like to be included on our e-mail list, please take the time to fill out the form below and return it to the American Sugar Cane League ATTN: Mailing List Update, P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302-0938 or you can e-mail us at LASugar@AmSCL.org

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Louisiana
Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting

All growers should have attended the Certified Burn Manager Program. The list below are the steps you must take when burning.

Step 1. Identify Smoke Sensitive Areas
Step 2. Obtain Fire Weather Forecast
Step 3. Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan
Step 4. Determine Smoke Category Day
Step 5. Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance
Step 6. Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume
Step 7. Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

Disaster Assistance, Mexico, Bi-lateral Trade Holiday Greetings - Willie Cooper

I believe I have stated in the past what Pete DeGravelles said to me upon coming to work at the League. What he had confided to me was that other than about every fifth year with negotiating the farm bill, I would really like this job because it would allow me the time to get out and on the road and visit with the good people of this industry. Well, if I could only wish for our only real concern which would be the renewal of the farm bill. This would be ecstasy.

Now, to add to the issues and concern list is that of our existing disaster. I, in my lifetime, can't ever recall such a year. Additionally, having spoken with several farmers, their fathers or grandfathers, I find many much older and wiser than I who also can't remember such adverse weather. Usually, following a tropical system or hurricane, the skies get pretty, having drawn down high systems from the north and west as the storms moved eastward. But, it was not to be this time. I don't think I need to describe the ensuing rains after the three storm systems passed. Oh! The third system was that of Hurricane Kenna which came through the proverbial "back door" from Mexico. (But, I don't think I needed to tell growers about Kenna.) And, to think that we were in a moderate drought mode this summer. The good Lord has his way of keeping us all humble, but Heaven knows none of us needed such a severe lesson to be reminded.

There have been several suicides by members of our industry in the past several months. The latest by a young farmer (if you call 50 young, which I guess I do now) from my area. A friend, a good family man, a good farmer. Why? is always the question. We might never really know the full answer to the question, but obviously, much of the answer seems to point to the depressive conditions with the weather, operations, etc . . . that totally exasperated Jody. If only someone, anyone, might have recognized his situation before.

Thus the reason for the meeting that was conducted on November 19 in Franklin. Jimmy Flanagan, the county agent from Iberia / St. Mary called me one day and expressed his concern for others in our industry. It was something that I guess we all sensed. But, we are all so caught up in our own day to day work and problems that none of us really had time to stop and think about whether there was something that we might do or say to others that may be torn, or in turmoil. USDA personnel, LSU AgCenter personnel including county agents from the cane belt, Commissioner Odom and other state officials, along with representatives from our U.S. Congressmen and Senators' offices gathered together to discuss the concern and share information. All in all, it was a good meeting for a good reason. I want to thank Jimmy and the LSU AgCenter for putting this gathering together. Even thought there may be differences of opinions at times and competition among individuals, it never fails that we can come together in bad times, as "one" family - the sugar family. In spite of how bad things may seem, it is not the end. The sugar farmers and millers of Louisiana have shown through the years their resilience. We are like the crop that we cultivate, resilient and strong - a survivor! This industry

has had many set backs through the years, and if we all live to a ripe old age we will probably bear witness to such a disaster again, although I hope not. But, at the end of the day we will still have our families, relatives, friends and neighbors to console us and help us through to the next day. Your pain goes not unnoticed. Hang in there!

Disaster Assistance, Mexico, Bi-lateral Trade

By the time this Bulletin arrives for your reading, the runoff election for US Senate will be over. Regardless of who wins, the US sugar industry will still be faced with several issues that could cripple not only the Louisiana industry, but also all domestic sugar producers. The League's leadership has been engaged for quite some time on the re-negotiations of the NAFTA side letter and are gravely concerned with our not being allowed consultation and input in the ongoing negotiations of what appears to be "USTR's" negotiations. Since the passage of the first two storms, several visits have been paid to our Congressional delegations' office in Washington where we have been actively seeking disaster assistance for Louisiana. In addition, we have been working with the entire domestic industry to move the Bush administration to our views on exclusion of sugar in bilateral trade pacs. It is my sincere hope that this administration will not allow for foreign farmers and millers to survive and prosper at the expense of the more efficient domestic sugar industry. Time will tell. We will surely know the answer to these questions in short time. Just know that your League and its leadership are working hard on these and other issues of critical concerns to all of us.

Holiday Greetings

Thanksgiving will have passed by the time you read this, so I hope that it was a good one. If it turns out that it didn't rain that day, I guess that would be considered good. A belated Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours.

Since the next Bulletin won't arrive until after Christmas, the staff and I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Good luck to all of you. Our thoughts are with you and your families every day. Please take care and best wishes!

Willie Cooper

What can one say about the longest serving FSA person in the United States other than there are very clear reasons he stays on at this job. First, I don't believe he considers it to be a job, rather it is more like public service to him. Second, he is the most knowledgeable person, I believe, in U.S. agriculture service on programs, the administrative rules, and the history. A virtual walking encyclopedia on U.S. ag policy. Third, he is well respected and liked by both the ag community and the legislative delegations, past and present.

Willie, there is one thing that I dread more than anything. Your retirement. Not necessarily for me, but for the entire agricultural community in this state. Whenever that day does come, while it will be a happy day in your life, it will be one of mixed emotions for me. Glad for you but sad for us. Your replacement will have more than a large pair of shoes to fill, he or she will need to fill out a complete wardrobe, and that my friend is a very tall order, for anyone.

I have known you for many years. So many that I don't remember exactly when it was that we actually first met. But, I believe it was during my tenure with the South Central Regional Planning and Development District. That goes back just shy of thirty years. I'm just glad that neither of us are showing our age. Thanks for everything you have done for the sugar industry and for all of Louisiana agriculture. Oh! And if you don't wish to ever retire, I'll gladly support that!

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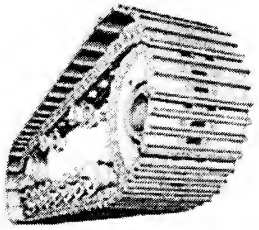

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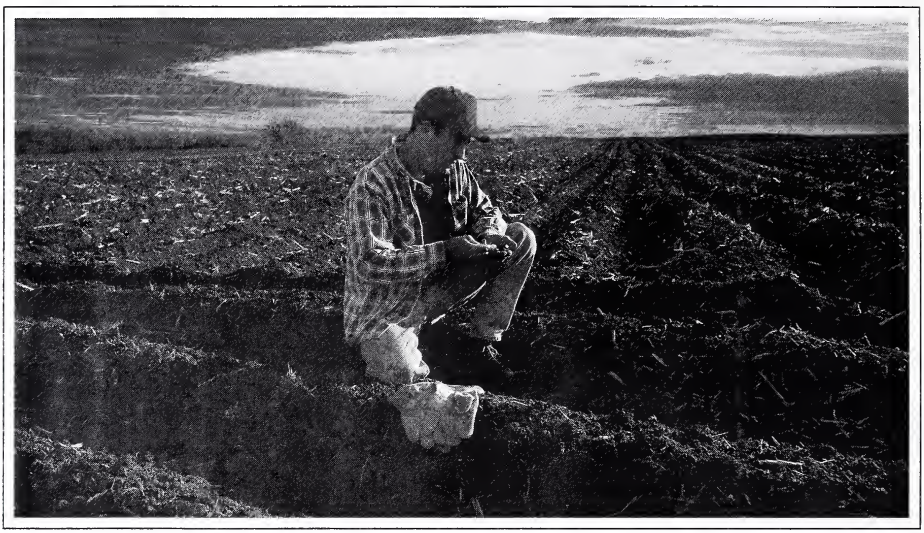

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Mexico Dispute Continues
Major Changes In Agricultural Leadership
League Officials visit Capitol Hill re Hurricanes/Disaster
Louisiana Sugar Tour
USDA WASDE November Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

As many of you know, I underwent quadruple bypass surgery in October and have been slowly returning to work over the past few weeks. I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for your prayers, cards, fruit baskets, calls, flowers, emails and your genuine outpouring of concern for my family and myself during this difficult time. You will never know how much your loving support has meant to me over the past few weeks. Thank you and God bless you!

Mexico Dispute Continues

The US industry's Mexico Task Force continues to confer with USTR on the ongoing sweetener negotiations with Mexico. Negotiators continue to work on the myriad of issues separating the various sides of the dispute and have expressed a desire to complete a deal before the December 15 end of the Mexican legislative session. However, progress has been sporadic and there is some doubt that an agreement will be reached in time for legislative action this year (to remove the HFCS-soda tax as a first step in initiating an agreement). The League's Jackie Theriot has been an integral part of this process and will continue to advise the US negotiators as the process moves forward.

Major Changes In Agricultural Leadership

The GOP takeover of the Senate ends the chairmanship of Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), but the changes do not end there. With the retirement of Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) and the move of Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN) to the Foreign Relations Chair, Senator Thad Cochran (R-MS) will become the new chairman of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee in January 2003. Senator Cochran will also maintain his chairmanship of the agricultural appropriations committee, ensuring that southern agricultural concerns will have a stronger voice in Senate agricultural policy discussions. Cochran's chairmanship of the committee could be relatively brief, however, as he appears poised to assume the chairmanship of the Appropriations Committee in two years. Hunt Shipman, Cochran's former agricultural assistant, returns from USDA's Farm and Foreign Agricultural Service to serve as chief of staff for the agriculture committee.

In the House, Chairman Larry Combest has announced that he will step down as chairman in December and will return to the private sector in May of 2003. Chairman Combest has been a great friend to the industry through the years and his leadership was vital to the passage of the

2002 farm bill, and to the inclusion of the sugar program changes we supported during that process. We wish he and his wife, Sharon, the best as he enters private life following a distinguished political career.

The race to succeed him as chairman has begun. Congressmen Bob Goodlatte (R-VA), Nick Smith (R-MI) Terry Everett (R-AL) and, possibly, Richard Pombo (R-CA) have expressed interest in the position and the House leadership has signaled early support for Goodlatte. The House steering committee will make its selections known in the coming weeks.

League Officials visit Capitol Hill re Hurricanes/Disaster

Charlie Melancon and Charles Thibaut returned to Washington, DC after the early November elections to update the Louisiana congressional delegation on the weather-related disaster brewing in Louisiana cane-growing regions. With the GOP now in control of both Houses of Congress and the White House, with the Louisiana Senate race still and doubt, and with the dramatic changes in agricultural leadership in the new Congress, it is extremely difficult to project the likelihood and/or timing of consideration of disaster legislation in the coming months.

Louisiana Sugar Tour

Twenty-one congressional staff visited Louisiana's sugar producing area in mid-November as a part of our annual fact-finding tour. The staff received extensive briefings on sugar cane research priorities during a November 15 visit to the Houma research facility, and toured the Cameco plant in Thibodaux later that day. Following an industry and trade briefing on Saturday, November 16, the staff viewed harvesting operations at the Laurel Valley Plantation before touring the Raceland Sugars mill. The congressional staff, who play crucial roles in the legislative process in Washington, were unanimous in expressing their appreciation to the League for the informative tour and the hospitality shown during their visit. The participants saw, first-hand, the problems affecting the industry in the aftermath of the storms, and this experience could prove invaluable if a disaster bill moves through Congress in the coming months.

USDA WASDE November Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its November World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Increased sales ahead of the October imposition of marketing allotments resulted in a 363,000 short tons (raw value) drop in beginning stocks to 1,295,000. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was lowered to 8,305,000 short tons (raw value) from October's 8,445,000 tons projection. The 2001/02 production estimate dropped to 7,906,000 tons from 7,954,000 tons. A drop in the Louisiana production projection resulted in 2002/03 Cane production falling to 3,990,000 from 4,070,000 tons, while 2001/02 is increased to 3,992,000 from 3,979,000 tons. 2002/03 Beet production was lowered to 4,315,000 from 4,375,000 tons due to lower area and yield forecasts, while 2001/02 decreased by 66,000 to 3,914,000 tons. 2001/02 and 2002/03 non-program imports were unchanged at 85,000 and 60,000 tons, respectively. The 2002/03 total imports estimate was unchanged at 1,565,000 tons. Louisiana cane sugar production for 2001/02 was increased to 1,587,000 from 1,575,000 tons, and 2002/03 was dropped by 80,000 to 1,520,000 short tons. The amount of 2001/02 sugar held by CCC was unchanged at 213,000 tons. Ending stocks fell to 1,260,000 from 1,563,000 short tons last month. 2002/03 stocks-to-use ratio was slashed to 12.7 percent from 15.5 percent last month. For 2001/02, the stocks-to-use estimate fell to 12.5 percent from October's 16.6 percent.

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Sugarcane Grower Realizes Benefits Of Reduced Tillage Program

Corn, soybean and cotton farmers have long realized the benefits of no till and minimum tillage: reduced costs, inputs and labor, as well as environmental advantages such as reduced soil erosion and water runoff. But until last year, sugarcane producers had not attempted minimum tillage.

In October 2001, Ricky Gonsoulin initiated a reduced tillage test plot on 11 acres of his family operated 3,500 acre sugarcane farm in New Iberia, Louisiana. He hopes to answer the following questions.

- How will reduced tillage affect yields?
- How will the cane residue affect planting processes?
- Will insect pressures, particularly nematodes, increase?
- Will weed shifts occur due to less tillage?
- What additional savings can be obtained with reduced tillage practices?

"So far, we have a win win situation with reduced tillage," says Gonsoulin, who enlisted help from Toby McCown, of DuPont, and Ken Naquin, of Monsanto. "We have found reduced tillage equal to if not better than conventional tillage. Our row integrity is staying in place. We're not losing topsoil. And there are a lot of extra benefits that we didn't even imagine."

For instance, Gonsoulin estimates sugarcane growers can save 45% to 60% in input costs compared to a typical fallow ground program. "Typical fallow ground costs for sugarcane growers, for tillage plus chemical, are in the neighborhood of $130 to $175 an acre," he adds. "We did this for anywhere from $70 to $80 an acre."

How the Program Works

Gonsoulin's pilot program started after harvest. He burned off the leaf trash and reestablished drainage in the field, allowing winter vegetation to grow to protect the soil through winter months. In April, after the sugarcane began growing, he applied 64 ounces of Roundup® UltraMAX and a pint of 2,4 D per acre. "Our goal was to control bermudagrass, johnsongrass and itchgrass, the three main weed culprits in the sugar industry," Gonsoulin explains. "We also wanted to kill the old sugarcane so it could start the rotting process before we planted the new sugarcane."

In May, Gonsoulin, Naquin and McCown split the test plot in half. On one half, they applied Roundup® UltraMAX at the rate of 64 ounces per acre. On the other half, they applied DuPont™ Velpar L® and Karmex® DF herbicides at the rate of one quart + two pounds per acre.

"By applying herbicide and not disturbing the integrity of the rows until the last possible minute we hoped to decrease weed shifts and increase weed control," says Gonsoulin. "We went through a wet period in July and August, but my fallow ground was clean. I didn't have to till it. But the rains brought on some annual grasses and I wanted to get rid of them before planting. So I applied an application of Gramoxone® Extra on August 19."

Before planting, Gonsoulin tried three different pieces of tillage equipment to determine which worked the best: a three row rotivator, a three row barber shank plow and a rotivator. While all three worked well, the barber shank plow did the best job, from his standpoint. It has fewer moving parts, took less time, uses less fuel and is a lot cheaper to operate.

"After trying the three tillage operations, we completed the planting process," says Gonsoulin. "We distributed seed pieces throughout the field, applied our final tillage application, and applied a preemergence herbicide, using the DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides[1] on one half of the field and Sencor® on the other."

Gonsoulin planted a nearby sugarcane field using conventional tillage practices. He estimates that the field had seven or eight tillage operations, compared to two on his reduced tillage field. "Looking at the two fields now, you can't see any difference. Because of our reduced input on the reduced tillage field, it stands to reason that the bottom line will be a lot better," he says.

But minimum tillage provides more than reduced labor and input costs. The rewards for the environment are also significant. "On traditional fallow ground practices, they say we lose eight to ten tons of topsoil per year, according to the NRCS," says Ken Naquin. "We lost approximately two to five tons with our program."

The step-by-step sugarcane reduced tillage pilot program Gonsoulin conducted is as follows.

Date	Sugarcane Culture	Treatment	Results
October 2001	1. Erect cane crop standing - ready to be harvested 2. Harvested crop. 3. Sugarcane leaves thrown on the ground. 4. Sugarcane leaves burned 5. Reestablished drainage in the field	Polado™	1. Increase sugar content of cane –gives ability to harvest cane earlier in the season 4. Burning allows for improved soil contact with preemergence herbicides and better contact of existing weeds from postemergence herbicides 5. Standing water eliminated
November 2001-March 2002	Winter vegetation covers the ground.		Holds the soil in place and gives protection in the winter
March-April 2002	Allow all annual and pre-annual grasses to establish along with sugarcane growth		
May 5, 2002	Split the 11 acre test plot in half	1. DuPont™ Velpar® L at a rate of 1 quart/ acre + Karmex® DF at 2 lbs/acre on ½ of the plot 2. Roundup® UltraMAX at 26 oz/acre on the other ½ of the plot	Targeting tough grasses including johnsongrass itchgrass, and bermudagrass
June - August 2002	Rainy throughout growing season.	Gramoxone® Extra – 1½ pints/acre	Controls existing vegetation which helps to dry soil so that initial tillage for planting operation may begin
August 29, 2002	1. Planted sugarcane in the test plot 2. 2 tillages with barber shank on entire plot *barber shank =less moving parts, less time, less fuel, more efficient, cheaper to operate than other tillage machinery according to Gonsoulin	1. Half of the plot = DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF (same side as earlier application) 2. Half of the plot Sencor®	No difference in growth between reduced tillage area and traditional tillage acres – same amount of sugarcane. *Plots have not been yielded*

USDA, NRCS and LSU have taken notice of Gonsoulin's pilot program. "LSU wants to get on board and do a big program next year," he says. "With the new farm bill, farmers need to be more efficient to pay the bills, and they have to start thinking of minimum tillage and their cost benefits."

While he hasn't yet answered all of his questions about the benefits of reduced tillage, Gonsoulin can say that he has reduced expenses and achieved good weed and insect control. However, he will have to wait until harvest to determine if there is a yield advantage.

Gonsoulin feels that with more studies and government-backed research, reduced tillage practices for sugarcane can be practiced nationally and perhaps throughout the world. "I can see the benefits," said Gonsoulin. "My ultimate goal is to convince other sugarcane-producing areas to practice reduced tillage because I can't make an impact by myself. We want to conserve topsoil and produce other benefits to the environment, not just across the state, but globally."

[1] New DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide will be available in 2003. DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide is a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron that provides the same broad spectrum of weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF in a single, convenient water dispersible product.

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By Windell Jackson

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Mud and Water - Cane Quality
Crop Losses

Tropical storm Isidore followed by Hurricane Lili did much damage to the Louisiana Sugar Industry. With relatively mild winds of 45 to 60 m.p.h., Isidore came ashore in the more eastern area of the cane belt. However, even with low wind-speeds, a tidal surge inundated much of the low-lying coastal regions of the cane belt. Prior to the tropical storm, most of the crop was relatively straight and should have given few problems to growers during harvest or at the mill during processing. The heavy rainfalls associated with Isidore flattened the crop throughout the cane belt. Many growers found their cane fields severely lodged the day before Isidore came on shore. With the large amount of rain, the tops of the cane filled with water. As winds increased the tall top-heavy cane was laid over gently, and there was no twisting or breaking of the cane stalks. Most fields went down in one direction and should have harvested fairly well. Early estimations of losses from Isidore were somewhere between five and ten percent reduction.

In less than a week, a full-fledged hurricane was setting in the Gulf of Mexico off the western coast of Louisiana. As Hurricane Lili approached the western cane belt, sustained winds were reported to be in excess of 150 m.p.h. However, by the time Lili came on shore the winds were down to 120 m.p.h. or less. During the hurricane, high rainfall totals were recorded, and it pushed a tidal surge of six to eight feet. Many coastal fields were still not completely drained form tropical storm Isidore. Once again, many of the low-lying coastal areas were flooded with salt water and rainwater. Because of the tidal surge associated with Hurricane Lili, growers reported water in fields and homes that had not been flooded in the last fifty years.

Typically, after a hurricane, the weather clears out and there are a couple of weeks of nice sunshine. However, after Lili, this was not true. In less than three days, many areas of the cane belt were receiving rain, with some totals as much as seven inches of rain. Once again, many of the low-lying regions were flooded and incurring the added expenses of running pumps to remove water.

Before Tropical Storm Isidore, planting was concluded for most of the cane belt. However, there were some areas, which were unable to be planted due to summer rains. A fair portion of the unplanted acreage was in St. Mary Parish. However, in the Houma/Thibodaux area growers were not able to plant a large number of their fields. At the writing of this article on November 20, 2002, it is estimated that forty to fifty percent of the acreage scheduled for planting in the Bayou region has been planted. Much of this acreage will not be planted this year. The standing water due to the excessive rains and flooding associated with the tropical storms have killed stands in the lower half of many fields that were planted this year. In addition, stands of cane are reduced in some areas in which the quarter-drains were slow to drain, and thin stands

can be found in many low spots that held water or stayed excessively damp. Once again, growers are reminded that LCP 85-384 for all of its good points does not tolerate wet field conditions.

There are many added expenses, which cannot be calculated at this time. There is the cost incurred by mills of having to stop and liquidate for the two storms, and the lost harvest time. Many mills lost ten days of harvest to the storms. If there is no mid December freeze, many mills will now be completing their harvest in mid to late January 2003.

Mud and Water

Since the release of LCP 85-384 and the widespread acceptance of combine harvesters, this is the first harvest season that the Louisiana Cane Industry has started with water-saturated fields. Due to the continuing rains, there have been very few if any days where field conditions were suited for harvest. However, due to the always-looming threat of stalk splitting freezes after mid December the industry has been forced to harvest under some of the worst conditions possible. No matter which harvesting system is employed (whole-stalk harvester or combine harvester), harvesting under these conditions will send a large amount of non-cane material to the mill.

During the harvest of out field tests this week it was easy to see some of the difficulties growers are having in sending good quality cane to the mill. The tests were on good sandy soil and had not received any significant rainfall for about a week. In different spots in the field, the middles were holding water. At the start of harvesting the tests, the operator of the harvester was running the base-cutter too deep in the soil. The depth of the base-cutter was adjusted so that it did not dig into the top of the row. One row was cut with a new setting and then the operator was allowed to return to his original setting. By raising the base-cutter, an unacceptable amount of cane was not harvested.

There were a number of tests being harvested that day. In an effort to speed up the process and reduce the amount of time the harvester was not operating in commercial cane fields, the test was harvested from one face in two directions. This worked quite well for the first test. Being down somewhat across the row, the test picked up well. However, the next test harvested was down on top of the row.

To facilitate harvesting with combine harvesters, out field tests are no longer planted as 3-row plots 32 ft. long, but are planted with 2-row plots 50 ft. long. With these changes test fields can be harvested somewhat easier than they were being harvested. Also, the longer plots seem to give the driver of the weigh-wagon and the combine operator a better chance to match their forward speeds.

One row of the two row plots was harvested in the direction in which the cane was leaning. There was an excessive amount of cane not harvested. The next row of the plot containing the same varieties was harvested against the lean. Much less cane was un-harvested, which gave an average of 273 lbs increase for each of the six plots. This would be equal to about twenty tons of cane per acre more. This is an extreme example and does not indicate that the industry is leaving ten tons of cane per acre by not harvesting in one direction. It is not feasible for growers to harvest in only one direction.

Cane Quality

The question is what can be done in an effort to reduce the soil and increase both profitability and production. Both are needed by the mills and the growers. Perhaps one of the best and most efficient ways to improve cane quality would be by the release of a new variety that is more suited to the combine harvester. As most people know, LCP 85-384 is not well suited to combine harvesting. It is a small barrel cane, with very tight shucks. If the extractor fans are turned-up, in an effort to remove shucks, too much cane is blown out of the back and tonnage suffers. In addition, LCP 85-384 lodges so severely that it does not have much of a chance of righting itself. The possibility of a new variety having any major impact on the industry is at least four years away.

In discussions with millers, there are many problems associated with all of the soil being sent to the mill. There are many questions about cane quality and the inability of some mills to

boil syrups and produce good quality sugar. There have been reports by mills of syrups that will not boil and have to be thrown away; increasing expenses to the mills and prolonging harvest. Mills are reporting that much of their equipment problems are related to problems caused by this abrasive affect of the sand from the mud coming into the mill. Boiler tubes are being worn away at a very alarming rate, as are the fans. In the mill, much of the equipment is already showing signs of extreme wear and the crop is only about 50% completed.

What can be done in the field to reduce the amount of soil being brought to the mill in the cane supply? Harvester manufacturers suggest there are many small things and not any one major thing that growers can do to their combines to improve cane quality. One suggestion is to follow the maintenance schedule found in the manufacturer's maintenance book; one of the most important maintenance tasks is to keep the bottom blades sharp. It is suggested that these blades should be changed at least every other day, but preferably every day. In addition, the chopping blades should be inspected daily and replaced at the first sign of wear. It is easy to chop cane. However, good sharp blades are needed to cut leaves into small portions so that they can be blown out of the back and not put into the wagon with the cane billets.

Crop Losses

Until this harvest is completed, there is no way to estimate accurately the loss that the Louisiana Sugar Industry has suffered. If it continues to rain, there is no way to estimate how much cane will be left in the field. At this time, there is no way to predict if there will be an early freeze, and if so, how much cane will be unprocessed. To this date, most mills are reporting that their recoveries are about fifty pounds of sugar per ton of cane less than they were at this time last year. Not only have the weather conditions greatly added to the expense of the harvest of the 2002 – 2003 crop, but also it has affected stubble and plant-cane crops for next year.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
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ELECTION MAY CLEAR WAY FOR SENSIBLE CLEAN AIR ACTION

This column has been a frequent critic of the many ill-advised environmental actions of the Clinton-Gore administration, particularly the attempted sell-out of American economic and defense interests via the Kyoto accord on "global warming." One key element of the Clinton-Gore strategy was to force closure of many coal-fired steam electric power plants (in the USA) in order to create some of the phony carbon dioxide emission reductions called for in the Kyoto scam, and at the same time appease the radical environmental constituency long advocating such closures. Although the U.S. Senate wisely rejected the Kyoto Treaty proposal, the attempt to cripple the nation's power supply and national security persisted. This sinister deed was attempted during the waning weeks of the Clinton-Browner EPA administration by changing (improperly) a long-standing agency policy on implementing New Source Review (NSR) requirements of the Clean Air Act.

New Source Review (NSR) refers to a requirement that major new sources of air pollution, such as new boilers for an electric power plant (or sugar mill) must undergo and pass a Federal/State review, and receive certification that all applicable Federal and State performance standards will be complied with. This requirement must be met before any construction of the new facility may begin.

When Congress first passed the Clean Air Act, it was stated clearly that there was no intention of imposing NSR standards on the many sources existing at the time, and Congress understood that most of the then existing sources would be operating for many years before becoming obsolete or wearing out and replaced by "new" facilities. Of course, existing sources that were actually causing violation of an ambient air quality standard were required to immediately reduce emissions sufficiently to achieve and maintain standards compliance. Because of the expressed wishes of Congress on NSR, EPA had a long-standing policy which allowed existing sources, including the many coal-fired steam-electric power plants in the northeast, to make the repairs and component part replacements necessary to keep these plants operating efficiently, so long as there was no increase in permitted emissions. Often, these repaired or replaced plant components were more energy-efficient than "existing" components, and actually reduced pollutant emissions.

The Clinton-Browner environmental sabotage was accomplished by abrogating long-standing policy and filing suits against all coal-fired power plants that had done any repairs or replaced component equipment. The massive penalties demanded by EPA would force most of the affected power companies into bankruptcy, and the power plants to close. The departing Clinton-Browner EPA administration obviously was not concerned that a major part of the U.S.

could be without electricity, but were obviously delighted to have pleased radical environmentalists. Furthermore, the incoming Bush administration would be stuck with the whole mess.

As expected, a high priority matter for the incoming Bush administration was to correct the malicious and subversive environmental mischief dumped in its lap. Almost from day one, environmentalists with the full and enthusiastic support of the news media, lambasted the Bush administration for environmental "back sliding" in general, and particularly on the "global warming" and NSR issues. A senior EPA staffer resigned, before news flashbulbs of course, in protest because the NSR policy change was put "on hold for review," even though the foolish lawsuits against plants were allowed to continue in order to allow for what will almost surely result in acquittals. When the Bush review indicated a need to pass regulation to clarify NSR applicability once and for all, an intensified environmentalist protest-news media "blitz" ensued.

About four months prior to the recent mid-term elections, the anti-Bush environmental news media "blitz" abruptly fell silent. Hardly another word was heard, locally at least, about national environmental issues. One should wonder why. The election results obviously did not turn out the way environmentalists wished, since one major obstacle to environmental progress, the U.S. Senate, has been constructively re-aligned. In fact, one "left" coast senator was heard to lament that the hearing she was planning before the Senate Environmental Committee on environmental "backsliding" by the Bush administration is now a dead issue.

Thus, the way is now clear for the Bush administration to set the nation's environmental issues and programs in proper order. Hopefully the NSR issue will be a high priority matter. It is important that NSR be set right because if it is not, who will be the next target of EPA lawsuits – old sugar mill boilers? Remember the old saying about "what goes around."

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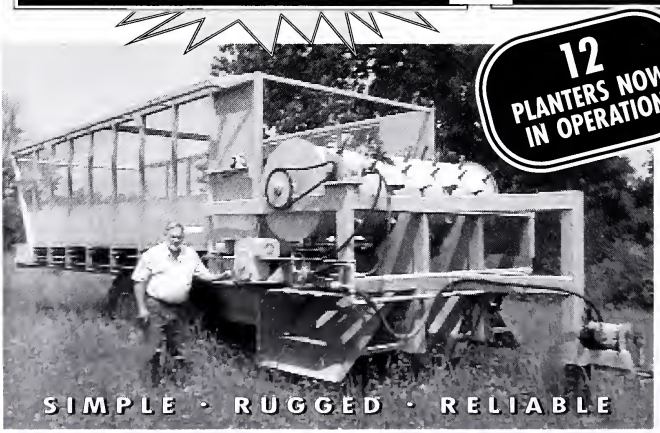

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If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

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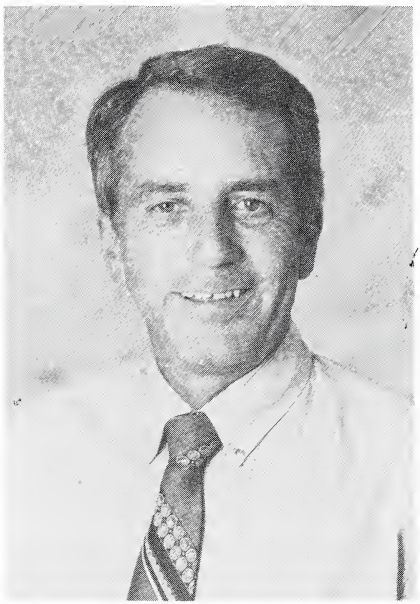

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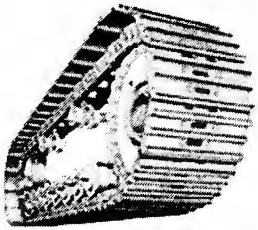

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

Weather - Disaster Relief - Mexico

I can remember all the grindings when Dad's car, parked on the carport, would be heavily laden with mud accumulated on his daily treks to and from the Glenwood factory. One of my chores as the only son was to make sure that the carport was clean, and boy did I hate this time of year. Out on the carport with the shovel, broom and hose pipe (water hose), I cleaned until it was acceptable for Mom, and she was somewhat meticulous. I could never understand why he couldn't just park his car on the street rather than the carport. It would have been so much easier for me. But, no-o-o-o-o! Year after year, harvest season and mud were synonymous. The main point is that I knew the mud would be coming home at some point during the grinding season, and most years it was usually later in the season. It was inevitable, but oh how I prayed for a dry harvest.

In my lifetime, I have never witnessed nor can I recall hearing of a more miserable situation as faced by the industry in this year of our Lord, 2002. To even think that there was a concern for the lack of rain in late spring and early summer is ludicrous, but true. Now to hear the weather man on TV last night (12/12) say that New Orleans was below average rainfall amounts so far in December really caught my attention. Surely that can't be right? But when the fields have been saturated for three consecutive months, it hardly seems to matter anymore as to whether the sun comes out or not, as you have to get out there to save the crop. The reality is that this is probably the wettest and worst grinding in the recorded history of our industry. I have spoken with several older farmers, mostly retired (if you can believe that a farmer ever retires), and none can remember such a harvest. It "ain't" pretty!

The good news is that your friends, families, and the citizens in the sugar belt are keenly aware of your plight. It amazes me how many people stop me or come over to me when they see me, and in some way express their sympathy and concern for every one of you, growers and processors. Don't think that you are in this alone, even though there are many days that you may feel dejected, frustrated and worn out. The entire sugar community is literally there and supportive. I see farmers that I have never known to wear a frown not being their usual upbeat selves. And, that worries me considerably. But when you ask how they are doing—which probably is not the most politically correct question— it is simply amazing when they look you straight in the eyes and get that little twinkle and smile and say "It could be worse." That type of attitude is the one that I've always remembered from growing up among sugarcane farmers in south Louisiana. It is that kind of determination in this commodity group that makes me so proud to say that I work for the Louisiana sugarcane industry.

My father, Joe, had passed away before I came to work at the League. His father, grandfather and great grandfather were all cane farmers in St. Matin Parish. My mother's grandfather and great grandfather also farmed the Canal Road plantation know as Cypress Grove outside of Napoleonville. Both families have cane farmers that date back to the early 19th century. On one particular visit with my mother before her death last spring, we talked of my younger days. Days when my parents were not so proud of me as I had a bit of the devil in me and "small" degree of hyperactivity or the unknown, at that time, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). In later years I had been elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives, had a beautiful family, and had matured, at least in her mind, and that was what was most important. She was "proud of me" and as she expressed, so would have my Dad. Her only regret, in her words, "was that your Father didn't live long enough to see you go to

work for the great industry that he loved." This industry with its wonderful, warm, and enduring people. "He would have been the proudest of you for that, as he loved the industry and its people." And, to be perfectly honest, I do too. As I have said in the past, there is a resilience in its people, one that I haven't found anywhere else. You are the kind of people who never meet a stranger.

While you struggle through this harvest, knowing that it will not be a good one for the record book or pocketbook, and as you come home daily and wonder if it is all worth it, realize that many people see you and have a rekindled appreciation for your hard work and many contributions to every community in this great sugar belt. They, too, are proud of you. And, although they may not say it directly to you, I have been told by many of their feelings of support and concern for you and your families' welfare and well being. Guys and ladies, hang in there! Unbeknownst to you, you are setting the standard for courage and determination that inspires all of us. Even more than before, it makes me very proud to be a part of this great industry.

Disaster Relief

Charles Thibaut and I have made several trips to Washington since the storms of September and October to discuss crop disaster. We met with the entire Louisiana delegation about our concerns and possible disaster relief for this industry. To say the least, we were well received by the entire delegation and their staff. Every member of the delegation has pledged support and effort toward this cause.

The Congress is adjourned until the beginning of the new Congress in January. At that time we will again revisit the issue with our delegation and other leaders and supporters of agriculture in the US Congress. There is much concern in Washington and the nation with the impending war and the new budget deficits. It will surely not be an easy task to secure disaster relief, but it is on the forefront of issues that the League feels needs to be accomplished at practically any cost. As soon as the Congress convenes, your leadership will return to Washington on your behalf. While we pray for you and your families, I might ask that you say your own little prayer that our leaders in Washington will understand your plight and come forward with a meaningful remedy to the needs of sugar growers and farmers of other commodities.

Mexico

As in everything that involves government and politics, the Mexican renegotiations of the NAFTA side letter evolves daily. As I believe you are quite aware, there were grounded reports of government-to-government agreements that reached beyond the limits of toleration by our industry. Jackie Theriot is one of four members of the US sugar MTF (Mexican Task Force) that has been attempting to negotiate a fair and meaningful agreement. We have at this time, (12/12/02), grave concerns with the elements that our government appears to have negotiated. Again, our legislative delegation is very engaged on your behalf in this effort. There are practically daily interchanges of information, and our delegation has caused the USTR's office (US Trade Representative) to re-engage our industry representatives on the matter. As I write this article, we are not pleased with our continued denied ability to consult with the US negotiators.

On the other hand, the Mexican Congress' lower chamber, on Tuesday (12/9) , voted to uphold the 20% tariff on HFCS going into Mexico. By the time you receive the Bulletin, the Mexican Senate should have acted on this measure and we are hopeful that there will be concurrence on the tax by that body. If so, we can be thankful to the Mexican Chamber for saving us from what was looking like a badly negotiated deal by our government. But if that does end up being the case, then I would like to say "Mucho Gracias" to the Chamber of Representatives of Mexico. It is hell to think that US farmers have to depend on someone else's legislature to save us. The "sugar" side letter of the NAFTA was agreed to by our Congress because the US negotiators in the NAFTA allowed for elements in the original agreement that would have been devastating to the industry. Now we are again faced with a similar, if not mirrored, situation. As we have expressed to our congressional delegation and USTR, "No deal is better than a bad deal!" The "side letter" is the law of the land, and while it is not perfect and we would have liked to improve it for everyone's best interest, it is the law of the land and far better that what our government appears to be proposing in their recent negotiations that were conducted without our industry's direct involvement nor consultation.

WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Mexico Dispute Hits The National Spotlight - US/Chile FTA USDA WASDE December Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The Senate runoff election in early December raised the impending sweetener agreement with Mexico to the national spotlight at a crucial time in the negotiating process. The industry's Mexico Task Force continued in December to seek consultation on the specific elements of the agreement that seemed all but finalized as the runoff campaign moved into the final stages.

Immediately following the Senate campaign, Mexico's Chamber of Deputies (i.e. their congress, controlled by the PRI, the opposition party in Mexico) rejected a motion to remove the 20 percent soda tax. The continuation of the tax on soda containing high fructose corn syrup indicates that the issue will be rolled over into next year and suggests that domestic concerns on both sides of the Rio Grande must be resolved before a final agreement is reached.

In the interim, Jackie Theriot and the other members of the industry's Mexico Task Force met in Washington, DC on December 12 and continued to press for a more proactive role in the negotiations, rather than being forced to react to a deal cut by government negotiators that have a limited understanding of the industry.

In early January, we also welcomed freshman Representative Rodney Alexander (D- LA 5th) to Washington following his runoff victory in the campaign to replace Rep. John Cooksey (R-LA), who gave up his seat to run for the Senate. We look forward to working with Congressman Alexander in the next session of Congress.

US/Chile FTA

The US and Chile announced in mid December completion of a bilateral trade agreement that creates a two tiered tariff system for Chilean sugar exports to the US, including a 2,000 metric ton tariff rate quota (TRQ) for raw sugar, refined sugar, and sugar containing products (SCP's). The full weight of the SCP is counted against the quota, not just the sugar portion. The TRQ grows by 5% per year over 12 years (to approximately 3,592 metric tons), regardless of whether Chile is a net exporter in a given year.The second tier tariff declines from the current MFN rate (15.36 cents/lb) to zero over 12 years. It appears that this occurs regardless of Chile's net exporter status. After 12 years, the TRQ is eliminated and Chile's access is tied to its net exporter status. (*Apparently*, this access level could be lower than that of year 12; possibly as little as zero.)

USDA WASDE December Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its December World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Beginning stocks were reduced to 1,288,000 short tons (raw value) from 1,295,000. Projected

U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 fell by 50,000 to 8,255,000 short tons (raw value), due to a 50,000 ton reduction in cane production to 3,940,000. The 2001/02 overall production and cane production estimates remained unchanged at 7,906,000 tons and 3,992,000 tons, respectively. 2002/03 and 2001/02 beet production was unchanged at 4,315,000 and 3,914,000 tons, respectively. 2001/02 non program imports were lowered by 4,000 to 81,000 and 2002/03 remained unchanged at 60,000 tons. The 2002/03 total imports estimate was unchanged at 1,565,000 tons. Louisiana cane sugar production for 2001/02 remained at 1,587,000, while 2002/03 fell another 100,000 to 1,420,000 short tons, based on reduced sugar recovery from cane. An increase in harvested area and yields led to an increase in Florida that partially offset the reductions in Louisiana. The amount of 2001/02 sugar held by CCC was reduced slightly to 212,000 tons. Ending stocks fell to 1,203,000 from 1,260,000 short tons last month. 2002/03 stocks to use ratio was reduced to 12.1 percent from 12.7 percent last month. For 2001/02, the stocks to use estimate was unchanged at 12.5 percent.

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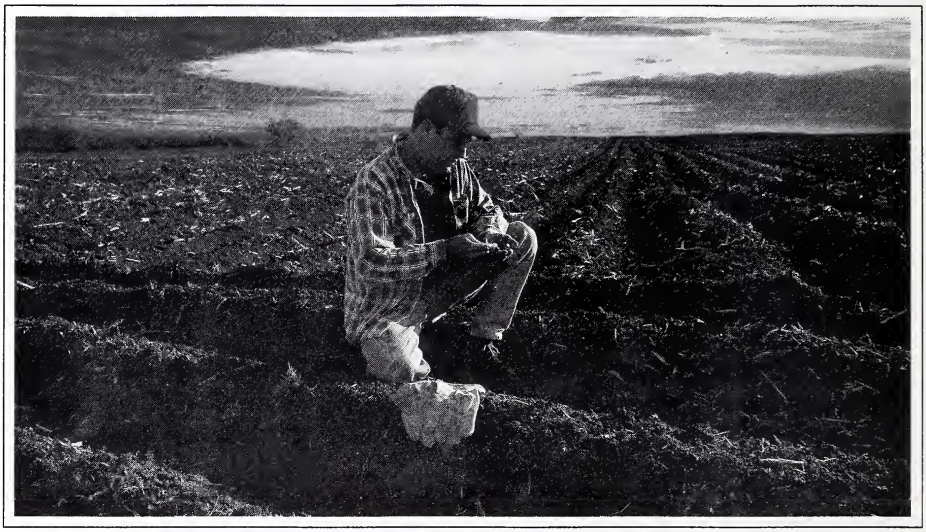

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Sugarcane Grower Realizes Benefits Of Reduced Tillage Program

Corn, soybean and cotton farmers have long realized the benefits of no till and minimum tillage: reduced costs, inputs and labor, as well as environmental advantages such as reduced soil erosion and water runoff. But until last year, sugarcane producers had not attempted minimum tillage.

In October 2001, Ricky Gonsoulin initiated a reduced tillage test plot on 11 acres of his family operated 3,500 acre sugarcane farm in New Iberia, Louisiana. He hopes to answer the following questions.

- How will reduced tillage affect yields?
- How will the cane residue affect planting processes?
- Will insect pressures, particularly nematodes, increase?
- Will weed shifts occur due to less tillage?
- What additional savings can be obtained with reduced tillage practices?

"So far, we have a win win situation with reduced tillage," says Gonsoulin, who enlisted help from Toby McCown, of DuPont, and Ken Naquin, of Monsanto. "We have found reduced tillage equal to if not better than conventional tillage. Our row integrity is staying in place. We're not losing topsoil. And there are a lot of extra benefits that we didn't even imagine."

For instance, Gonsoulin estimates sugarcane growers can save 45% to 60% in input costs compared to a typical fallow ground program. "Typical fallow ground costs for sugarcane growers, for tillage plus chemical, are in the neighborhood of $130 to $175 an acre," he adds. "We did this for anywhere from $70 to $80 an acre."

How the Program Works

Gonsoulin's pilot program started after harvest. He burned off the leaf trash and reestablished drainage in the field, allowing winter vegetation to grow to protect the soil through winter months. In April, after the sugarcane began growing, he applied 64 ounces of Roundup® UltraMAX and a pint of 2,4 D per acre. "Our goal was to control bermudagrass, johnsongrass and itchgrass, the three main weed culprits in the sugar industry," Gonsoulin explains. "We also wanted to kill the old sugarcane so it could start the rotting process before we planted the new sugarcane."

In May, Gonsoulin, Naquin and McCown split the test plot in half. On one half, they applied Roundup® UltraMAX at the rate of 64 ounces per acre. On the other half, they applied DuPont™ Velpar L® and Karmex® DF herbicides at the rate of one quart + two pounds per acre.

"By applying herbicide and not disturbing the integrity of the rows until the last possible minute we hoped to decrease weed shifts and increase weed control," says Gonsoulin. "We went through a wet period in July and August, but my fallow ground was clean. I didn't have to till it. But the rains brought on some annual grasses and I wanted to get rid of them before planting. So I applied an application of Gramoxone® Extra on August 19."

Before planting, Gonsoulin tried three different pieces of tillage equipment to determine which worked the best: a three row rotivator, a three row barber shank plow and a rotivator. While all three worked well, the barber shank plow did the best job, from his standpoint. It has fewer moving parts, took less time, uses less fuel and is a lot cheaper to operate.

"After trying the three tillage operations, we completed the planting process," says Gonsoulin. "We distributed seed pieces throughout the field, applied our final tillage application, and applied a preemergence herbicide, using the DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides[1] on one half of the field and Sencor® on the other."

Gonsoulin planted a nearby sugarcane field using conventional tillage practices. He estimates that the field had seven or eight tillage operations, compared to two on his reduced tillage field. "Looking at the two fields now, you can't see any difference. Because of our reduced input on the reduced tillage field, it stands to reason that the bottom line will be a lot better," he says.

But minimum tillage provides more than reduced labor and input costs. The rewards for the environment are also significant. "On traditional fallow ground practices, they say we lose eight to ten tons of topsoil per year, according to the NRCS," says Ken Naquin. "We lost approximately two to five tons with our program."

The step-by-step sugarcane reduced tillage pilot program Gonsoulin conducted is as follows.

Date	Sugarcane Culture	Treatment	Results
October 2001	1. Erect cane crop standing - ready to be harvested 2. Harvested crop. 3. Sugarcane leaves thrown on the ground. 4. Sugarcane leaves burned 5. Reestablished drainage in the field	Polado™	1. Increase sugar content of cane –gives ability to harvest cane earlier in the season 4. Burning allows for improved soil contact with preemergence herbicides and better contact of existing weeds from postemergence herbicides 5. Standing water eliminated
November 2001-March 2002	Winter vegetation covers the ground.		Holds the soil in place and gives protection in the winter
March-April 2002	Allow all annual and pre-annual grasses to establish along with sugarcane growth		
May 5, 2002	Split the 11 acre test plot in half	1. DuPont™ Velpar® L at a rate of 1 quart/ acre + Karmex® DF at 2 lbs/acre on ½ of the plot 2. Roundup® UltraMAX at 26 oz/acre on the other ½ of the plot	Targeting tough grasses including johnsongrass itchgrass, and bermudagrass
June - August 2002	Rainy throughout growing season.	Gramoxone® Extra – 1½ pints/acre	Controls existing vegetation which helps to dry soil so that initial tillage for planting operation may begin
August 29, 2002	1. Planted sugarcane in the test plot 2. 2 tillages with barber shank on entire plot *barber shank =less moving parts, less time, less fuel, more efficient, cheaper to operate than other tillage machinery according to Gonsoulin	1. Half of the plot = DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF (same side as earlier application) 2. Half of the plot Sencor®	No difference in growth between reduced tillage area and traditional tillage acres – same amount of sugarcane. *Plots have not been yielded*

USDA, NRCS and LSU have taken notice of Gonsoulin's pilot program. "LSU wants to get on board and do a big program next year," he says. "With the new farm bill, farmers need to be more efficient to pay the bills, and they have to start thinking of minimum tillage and their cost benefits."

While he hasn't yet answered all of his questions about the benefits of reduced tillage, Gonsoulin can say that he has reduced expenses and achieved good weed and insect control. However, he will have to wait until harvest to determine if there is a yield advantage.

Gonsoulin feels that with more studies and government-backed research, reduced tillage practices for sugarcane can be practiced nationally and perhaps throughout the world. "I can see the benefits," said Gonsoulin. "My ultimate goal is to convince other sugarcane-producing areas to practice reduced tillage because I can't make an impact by myself. We want to conserve topsoil and produce other benefits to the environment, not just across the state, but globally."

[1] New DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide will be available in 2003. DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide is a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron that provides the same broad spectrum of weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF in a single, convenient water dispersible product.

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Drainage -ASSCT - Harvester Modification
Long Term Polado Treated Cane-Good News/Bad News

Ruts must be drained before work can be done in stubble fields. How to drain ruts that are deeper than the field ditches is the problem that growers now face. In reading previous years, issues of The Sugar Bulletin recommendations and comments about draining rutted fields most often appeared in February issues. Most of these articles pointed out that only a small portion of the crop was badly rutted and needed to be attended to (drained) as soon as possible. Unfortunately, there have been very few fields harvested under ideal conditions during the 2002 harvest season. Most growers were forced to rut fields from day one and as it looks now, to the end of harvest. The advice given in these back issues was very sound then, and with LCP 85 384 now on 90% of the state's acreage, it may even be more sound. Since the release of LCP 85 384, many researchers and growers have cautioned that the variety does not tolerate wet field conditions. In previous years, poor stands have been noted in this variety in plant cane and stubble fields that were slow to drain. Many of these weak spots were on either side of quarter drains that stayed damp but did not have water standing in them for long periods.

At this time because harvest conditions are so poor, many growers are wondering if they should harvest fields of plant cane on heavy soils. Fields of plant cane on heavy soil should have been harvested during dry periods earlier in the harvest; however, because of the wet field conditions throughout the harvest they could not be harvested. The dilemma to be faced is whether it is better to harvest, and in the process rutting fields and possibly destroying yield potential in these fields as first stubble. Harvesting cane grown on clay soils when the fields are saturated from rains is very costly, and there is always the potential of damaging equipment while harvesting under such adverse conditions. On the other hand, is it better to abandon these fields and leave them undamaged to produce a good crop next harvest?

Most growers and mills are reporting tonnage to be about, if not better than, what was predicted prior to the tropical storms. Sugar is running from 30 to 50 lbs. per ton of cane below expectations because of the poor harvesting conditions (severely lodged cane and muddy field conditions). Because of the extremely high cost of production and processing, this will not be a profitable year for either grower or miller.

The specter of a severe freeze looms over many of the mills. Many growers are reporting that they are only 50% complete with harvest and are not expecting to complete harvest until mid January or later. At the writing of this article on December 9, most all the industry has received at least one frost. Lows of 31 to 32 degrees were reported for the more southern region of the cane belt with minimum temperatures of 28 to 29 degrees reported in the more northern parishes. These temperatures

should do no damage to the cane. However, some of the insulating value provided by the green canopy has been lost; a minimum freeze could do more damage than would normally be expected.

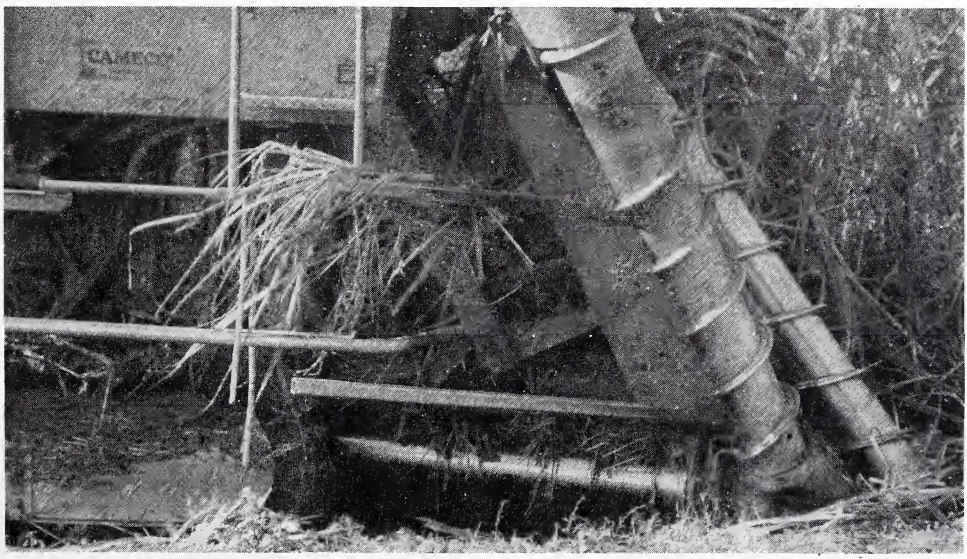
ASSCT

Growers and processors are reminded of the upcoming dates of the ASSCT meeting in Baton Rouge. Once again, the Louisiana Division of ASSCT will hold its annual meeting at the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center. The dates for the meeting are Tuesday and Wednesday, February 4-5, 2003. The technical session for the agricultural section will be held Tuesday afternoon, with the technical manufacturing session being held Wednesday morning. For additional information, contact Denver Loupe at 225-578-6930 or visit the ASSCT website at www.assct.org.

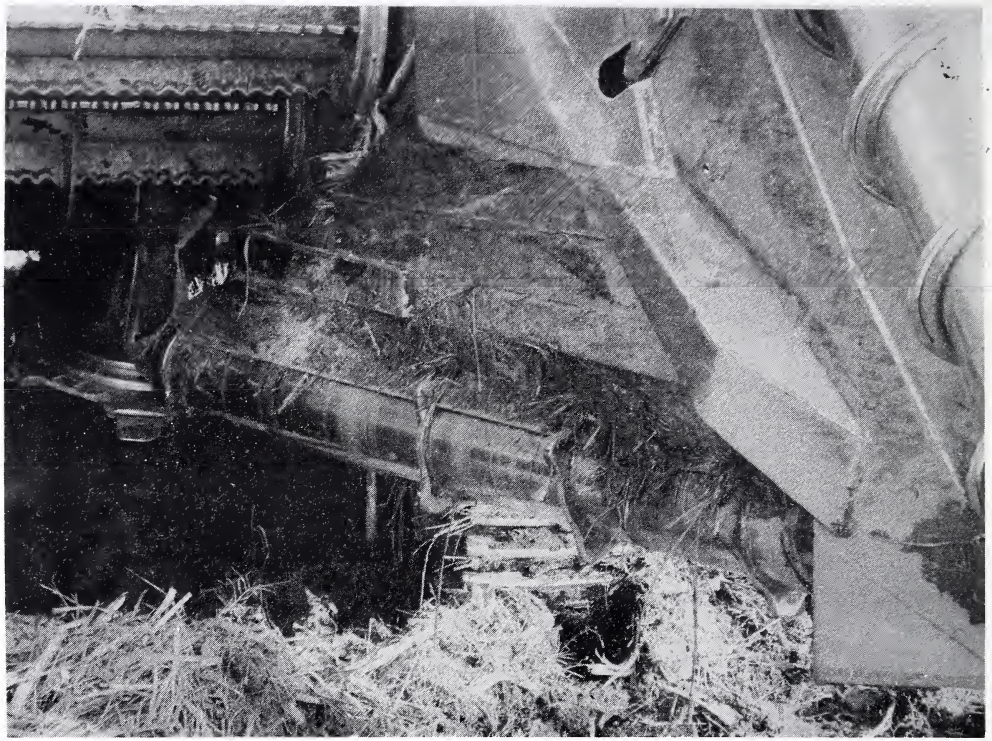
Harvester Modification

This year the dedicated funding committee provided funding for several related projects dealing with improving the quality of cane deliveries. These projects dealt with improving the bottom blades and modifications to the front end of a combine harvester. The modifications to the front end of the harvester included the use of scrolls with live points and replacement of each slide shoe with a rotating cylinder (Picture 1). The cylinders have a set of three lifting fingers on their front half (Picture 2). These fingers lift the cane along the top and side of the row. The cylinders extend all the way back to the bottom blade as can be seen in Picture 3.

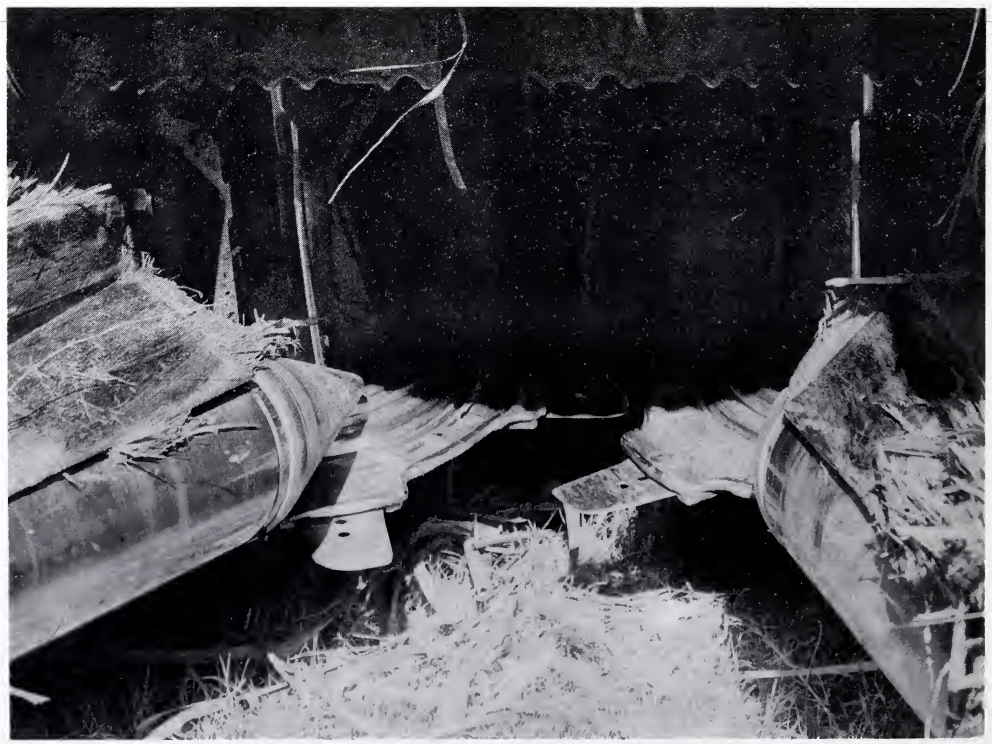
Mike Robichaux and Bobby Judice who operate Frank Martin Farms of Franklin, LA, are evaluating the modified combine. The modifications have been in use for about half of the harvest season. Mike and Bobby report that the modified combine sends a higher quality cane to the mill and misses less cane. After the modifications, the harvester operator does not have to run the bottom blades as deeply in the soil. They both agree that the modified combine is putting less soil into the loads that it harvests. Bobby notes that he operates the transloader and he thinks that he sees a visual improvement in the quality of the cane harvested by the modified combine. Mike operates the harvester and states that since the last modification (about one week) he has not washed out the rollers of the modified combine. Both of their combines have been operating in the same mixed clay soils. They have had to wash the rollers of the non modified combine once a day, and a few times two times a day during the same period. As of yet no data has been collected from this harvester. It is hoped that data will be collected this harvest and that the information can be presented at upcoming meetings.



Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3

Long Term Polado Treated Cane

Growers generally apply their first application of Polado to fields on clay soils in an effort to harvest early before the rains start. This harvest many of these early treated fields could not be harvested as scheduled and growers and millers are questioning the quality of long term, more than ninety days, Polado treated cane. In field observations, Herman Waguespack noted that other than being dehydrated and the tops killed by Polado, the cane is still sound. He noted that he was still able to chew (very scientific!) sections of cane from the top most joints without finding any off flavor or smell. He also noted that, as one would expect, the top eyes of the cane were all germinated, giving the stalk of cane a very green bushy top. Many of these fields have gone to the mill and the mills have not reported any significant problems in processing this material.

Good News/Bad News

The good news is the fact that at the writing of this article the American Sugar Cane League **has received no complaints from the public about** smoke and ash. The bad news is the reason for the lack of complaints. Due to frequent rains, only a small percentage of harvested fields have been burned either prior to harvest or after harvest. Research data gathered in previous years has indicated that there is a yield reduction when cane trash is not removed after harvest. In addition, data indicates if trash is to be removed by burning, that the fields should be burned before the end of January. Research also indicates an increase in yields from fields if the trash is removed by mechanical means in February and March. However, the largest increases in yields come from the removal of trash in the month of January. Preliminary data suggest that the greatest increases in yields from trash removal are obtained in older stubbles that were treated with Polado. Growers are urged to remove trash as quickly as possible, and in doing so, remember that the information presented during "Burn Certification Classes" apply to the burning of cane trash as well as burning standing cane. **Keep up the good work and keep down the number of complaints.**

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

EPA Releases Proposed Boiler Regulation

A draft of long anticipated rules that are intended to limit emission of hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) from industrial boilers including sugar mill bagasse boilers was released for public review in early December 2002 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These proposed rules are expected to be published in the *Federal Register* before the end of December 2002, and critiques and suggestions can be submitted for up to 60 days after the date of publication. There would then be a period in which EPA is obliged to consider all legitimate arguments, revise the draft rules if appropriate, and then promulgate final rules that become effective on the date published *Federal Register*, probably mid-2003. It is suggested that anyone interested in a printed copy of the rules wait for the *Federal Register* version, because downloading the material from EPA's website requires 450 pages of printed paper and considerable "on-line" time.

As proposed, the rules apply to "major" sources of HAPs, defined in the proposed rules as a stationary source or a group of stationary sources located in a contiguous area and under a common control (such as bagasse boilers at an individual sugar mill) that has the potential to emit any single HAP at a rate of 10 tons or more per year or any combination of HAPs at a rate of 25 tons or more per year. This definition agrees with and reinforces the definition in the Clean Air Act and Congress's obvious intent, and rejects the arguments or environmentalists seeking to apply the statutory 10 ton/25 ton annual limit to all boilers of a similar type located in a geographic area, such as all bagasse boilers in southern Louisiana or central Florida. This is good news in that bagasse boiler stack emissions tests conducted at several Louisiana sugar mills (at considerable expense of the American Sugar Cane League) and subsequently reported to EPA's study group, indicate that HAP emissions are well below the "major" source level.

Hydrogen chloride (hydrochloric acid or HCl) was added to the HAP target list sometime after the Louisiana stack testing for HAPs was conducted, and HCl testing was not included in the Louisiana tests. However, HCl emissions from bagasse boilers should be no problem because there is very little chlorine in bagasse and most that is present remains in the ashes removed from the boiler rather than emitted as HCl in the boiler flue gas. Futhermore, all large bagasse boilers including all new bagasse boilers built in the last 25 years are equipped with a hydroscrubber, and these hydroscrubbers efficiently remove HCl from flue gas.

It now appears that the major concern for the Louisiana sugar industry is what, if any, additional evidence of rule exemption may be required of the individual sugar mills. Testing

individual bagasse boiler stack emissions for HAPs is very expensive and would be unaffordable in the current difficult economic situation. Hopefully, no additional testing will be required to prove what has already been proven by stack testing and "materials balance" – that no Louisiana sugar mill can possibly emit HAPs in levels approaching those for "major" source classification.

An interesting thing about the proposed regulation is that carbon monoxide (CO), while not being regulated as a "HAP," is being regulated under the rule as a surrogate for organic HAP emissions because of a demonstrated fact that as CO emissions go higher, so also do organic HAP emissions. Under the proposed rule, new bagasse boilers would be required to maintain CO in stack emissions at 400 ppmv or less, dry at 3 percent oxygen, over a 24-hour daily averaging time. While this is in line with typical CO limits in Title V emissions permits, the rule would also require installation of continuous CO and O_2 monitors and recorders in order to demonstrate compliance and meet reporting requirements, all backed up by original and annual stack testing for target HAPs. "Major" sources will obviously have a very expensive "monkey on their backs."

While the proposed regulations are supposed to apply only to "major" emission sources, the regulations are also establishing floor level "MACT" standards, or the maximum achievable control technology applicable to sources of a kind (in the case of sugar mill boilers it is the MACT for "large solid-fueled boilers"). When sources such as sugar mills increase overall emissions to above the "PSD" level of 250 tons per year, new boilers are ordinarily required to meet any applicable "MACT" standard and thus be affected by the new rules. The best advice for sugar mills is to avoid PSD if at all possible by more efficient heat management and conversation, or possibly by means of a co-generation arrangement with an entity separate from the sugar mill.

Hopefully, there will be more pleasant environmental news to report in 2003. Happy New Year!

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MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

Planning Ahead For The Next Grinding Season

I am sure no one will be sorry to see the end of the 2002/03 season. Now that it is drawing to an end, it is time to look forward to the next season and in particular to what changes might need to be made in the mills.

There will probably not be much in the way of profit that may be ploughed back into major modifications. However, there are possibly some small and inexpensive modifications that could be worthwhile considering. Some of them relate to the filters and pans, the two areas which have been most affected by the adverse processing conditions.

1. Flocculant Preparation Most mills do not have adequate flocculant preparation equipment. The result is that the flocculant is not used optimally, leading to higher usage then necessary and poorer performance. The requirements are not onerous, and the plant should be designed to cope with excessive soil conditions as have been experienced this season, since it costs very little extra to size it generously.

The stock solution should be made up as a 0.1% solution, and aged for about 3 hours before use. This time is required for the complete dissolution of the flocculant and for "unfolding" of the long chain polyelectrolyte molecules. Two tanks are required, with one tank being used for preparation/aging while the other is being used to supply the process.

The tanks must be made of plastic or coated to prevent contact between the solution and metal. For the same reason, the water used should ideally be cooled condensate, without any ionic species in the water. Ionic species attach to the ionized portion of the polyelectrolyte and reduce its effectiveness.

On dosing flocculant to process, the solution should be further diluted to 0.05%.

2. Increased Bagacillo Supply Most of the mills have an inadequate supply of bagacillo, especially under present conditions of high mud loading. The bagacillo ratio (100 x mass dry bagacillo/mass dry clarifier solids) should be above 80%. This leads to higher filtration rates and improved filter capacity. In times of bad weather conditions, the amount of soil coming in with the cane can double. However, the provision of sufficient bagacillo can reduce the specific cake resistance, which relates to filter capacity, by a factor of 10 – a far more significant effect.

The use of additional flocculant at the filters can partially make up for the lack of bagacillo, but at additional cost and complication. But evidence from Australia indicates that flocculant addition at the filters can be eliminated with sufficient bagacillo.

3. Hot Liming More mills changed this season from cold to hot liming. All of them have reported favorably on the change. Among the benefits reported are reduced or minimal scaling in heaters, better clear juice quality, and reduced evaporator scaling. No doubt some of the other benefits found by Gillian Eggleston's work are also being achieved, such as reduced dextran

formation, reduced inversion losses, lower lime usage and improved clear juice color.

4. Entrainment Separators on Filtrate Lines It is surprising that some of the mills have no entrainment separators on the vacuum lines from the filtrate receivers to the ejectors. This is often the source of serious entrainment losses. The pumping of hot filtrate under vacuum is a demanding duty, because the liquid is close to its flash point under vacuum and the NPSH available is low. Problems with the pumps quickly lead to high levels in filtrate receivers. Level operated relief values on the receivers are often not able to eliminate gross entrainment, and they have no effect on the entrainment that occurs under steady conditions. A simple cyclonic separator in the line to the condenser or ejector is sufficient to catch any entrainment.

It is important too, that the entrainment return pipe has a U seal, to stop vapor flowing up the return pipe. Ideally the return line incorporates a slight glass, positioned for convenient observation, and an external drainable U leg.

5. Clear Juice pH Levels Increasing pH levels has been a trend over the last few years. This does not require any plant modification, merely adjustment of the controller set point. Higher pH levels are important in efforts to reduce inversion losses, which can be very significant. In addition, higher pH levels generally lead to better clarification with little, if any, observable increase in sugar colors.

6. Reduced Mud Overflow Mud is generally allowed to overflow from the filter boot to the ground floor mud tank, to be pumped back up to the mud mixer. This is bad practice, firstly because pumping of the mud destroys the flocs which have been formed, and secondly because this leads to cooling of the mud and the contents of the mud tank, thus promoting microbiological degradation.

It is fairly simple to automate the level control from the mud mixer to each filter, admitting only as much as necessary to each filter boot.

7. Pan Circulation Improving pan circulation will help alleviate, but not eliminate, the bad boiling conditions experienced. But under more normal conditions, improved pan circulation will lead to an effective increase in pan capacity, and better sugar crystallization conditions.

There are two approaches to consider. The first involves using circulation steam (sometimes referred to as jigger steam), where vapor 1 is distributed under the calandria to induce circulation. The amount of vapor 1 used is small, and it does not dissolve any crystal. This has been found to reduce C boiling times by 2 hours at Raceland. The second approach is to convert a flared pan, known to be a poor circulation design, to a straight sided pan, as has been done at Lula and Alma. This improves the geometry and adds additional volume and additional heating surface.

8. Reporting Crystal Content Some mills report crystal content in massecuites, but it seems that most mills do not. This is calculated from massecuite and molasses purities, and has more significance than looking at purity drops only. It is important to achieve good massecuite exhaustion through high crystal contents to reduce the total quantity of massecuite to be boiled and to reduce the recirculation of impurities.

9. Refractometer Brix vs. Spindle Brix Most sugar industries around the world have phased out spindle Brix in favor of refractometer Brix. The latter is more accurate and more closely represents dissolved solids, particularly in massecuites. A number of the Louisiana mills have made the change, and it would make comparisons much easier if all the mills made the step forward.

10. Cane Billet Length Is this under the mills control? A longer billet length would reduce the number of cut ends, thus reducing the potential for degradation losses and the formation of dextran and other impurities. It would have the added benefit of reducing the losses of sugar on the wash tables.

The lower bulk density achieved with longer billets should not be a problem with present vehicle weight limits, most trailers have unused volume. There would be a possibility of slightly more leaves on the billets, but could perhaps be dealt with by faster harvester fan speeds. I am sure most mills would accept slightly more leaves in exchange for reduced losses and lower dextran levels.

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Volume 81, No. 5 **February 2003**

THE SUGAR BULLETIN

Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

Announcing the

Eightieth Annual Meeting

of the

American Sugar Cane League

of the U.S.A., Inc.

Wednesday, March 5, 2003 - 10:00 a.m.
Thibodaux Civic Center
310 N. Canal Blvd., Thibodaux, Louisiana

Registration begins at 9:00 a.m.
At this meeting there will be an election of members
of the Board of Directors to serve during the ensuing year.

A luncheon will following the meeting at 12 Noon.
Congressman Billy Tauzin has been invited to be the guest speaker.
(See Up Front with the League for more information)

The League Foundation will also hold a meeting to elect a Board of Directors.

All members of the League will please consider this an official notice to attend.

The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Organ of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.

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Windell R. Jackson/Senior Agronomist
Herman Waguespack, Jr./Agronomist
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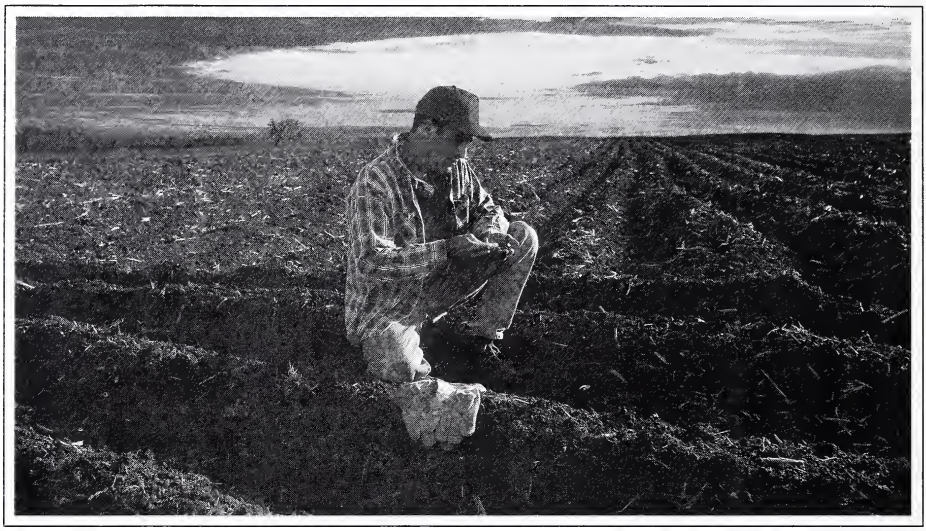

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

Annual Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League
Report of the Nominating Committee
Disaster - New Acreage

The Eightieth Annual Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League will be held March 5, 2003 at the Thibodaux Civic Center in Thibodaux, Louisiana. Registration will begin at 9:00 a.m. and the meeting will be called to order by Chairman of the Board Jackie Theriot at 10:00 a.m.

The first order of business will be nominations and election of the Board of Directors for the ensuing year. Following the election there will be reports from the Finance Committee, Legislative Committee and Research Committee. Any other business to come before the general membership will be considered before adjourning.

The High Yield Awards Program will be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting again this year.

Congressman Billy Tauzin has been invited to be the guest speaker. It is unknown, at this time, if he will speak before, during, or after lunch. But, plans will be made according to his schedule.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO RETURN THE RSVP CARD STAPLED TO THE MIDDLE OF THIS ISSUE. THIS WILL AID US IN GETTING A HEAD COUNT FOR THE MEAL.

The Board of Directors and Staff of the League urge your attendance and solicit your input at the annual meeting.

Report of the Nominating Committee

The following individuals were nominated at the annual committee meeting to serve on the American Sugar Cane League Board of Directors beginning on March 5, 2003.

Grower Member Nominees

David Allain
Jessie Breaux
Grady Bubenzer
Wallace Ellender
John Gay
Ronald Gonsoulin
Dean Gravois
Warren Harang, III
Jackie Judice
Robert "Bobby" Judice
Lawrence "Boo" Levert, III
Jerome "Jerry " McKee
Daniel Naquin, Jr.
Carl Newton
Howard Robichaux
Raphael Rodriguez
Donald Segura
Frank Sotile, Jr.
Charles Thibaut
Carlton Townsend
Daniel Viator
Kirk Walker

Processor Members
Craig Caillier
Mike Daigle
Dan Duplantis, Sr.
Ronald Guillotte, Jr.
Buckley Kessler
Chris Mattingly
Greg Nolan
Anthony Parris
Rivers Patout
Kenneth Peltier
Matthew "Butch" Plauche
R.L. "Bobby" Roane
David Stewart
Jackie Theriot
Tommy Thibodeaux
Leonard Waguespack, II

Processor At-large Member Nominees
Lonnie Champagne
Wilson LeBlanc
A.J. "Brother" LeBourgeois
Duane Legendre
Charlie Schudmak
Richard Viator

Disaster

By the time everyone gets this month's addition of the Bulletin, the industry should have fully completed the 2002 harvest. This crop will be the one that you will be telling your young children and grandchildren about when we get some adverse weather during future grinding seasons. You'll probably say, "Ain't nothing like the '02 crop." Under a normal season, we can start off wet or dry, but then go to the opposite condition during the harvest. And if you have really bad luck, you might even catch some more rain toward the end of the harvest. But that was not to be in the year of our Lord, 2002. Rain from before the beginning to after the end. I guess if we are to be grateful for something, it was that we didn't get a freeze.

Imagine farmers concerned with the need for rain in the spring and summer. Even to the extent that some of the local priests and pastors began asking for the favor of rain from the pulpit. I have always said that such requests should be the request of last resort when going to the church's clergy. For some reason they pray "in general" for their parishioners' needs and forget to quantify that need. And then remember, all the clergy are now praying for the same thing. So while we are always appreciative of the efforts of these good people of the cloth, neither we nor they could ever have imagined or fathomed what Mother Nature and the Good Lord had in store for us in this just finished season.

Well, that weather phenomenon is over, at least for this crop year with hopes and prayers that we will never see the likes of such weather again, at least not in our lifetime. Now our hopes are for the least amount of damage to our fields and stubble. I think this is one area where the will of the clergy combined can maybe do us some good because we need as much help with next year's crop as is heavenly possible.

Now that we are finished the harvest, and have done the best we can in this effort, it is now time to reflect on this past year. It never ceases to amaze me, the obstacles thrown in front of the growers and processors of this industry. It was literally enough to discourage the most confident and upbeat of our industry. At the beginning of the season, I saw some discouragement and concern by you, but once you realized that it was a task that demanded your full time and dedication, and one that could not be ignored, you treated this particular harvest just like the previous ones you and your forefathers had previously faced. It just had to get done, and you would do it. For that you should all be highly commended. It took a vast amount of courage to get into your fields each morning, knowing what you left the previous afternoon, many times not just poor conditions, but often in pouring rains and cold winds. The kind of situation that no one in Washington can ever imagine, unless, of course, it is someone up there who has grown up on a sugarcane farm in Louisiana. You are to be commended for your efforts. One didn't have to explain to the grocer, car dealer, or any other business persons or citizens in your communities how bad the situation was. This time, they were witnessing it. They knew what you were facing and were praying for you. I guess they knew that this industry can oftentimes get itself out of political dilemmas, but not just so with weather-

related ones.

As I write this article, I have been on the phone all morning with our Washington reps and members of our Congressional delegation and others in Washington discussing disaster relief. Charles Thibaut and I traveled to Washington in early October to prepare our friends on the hill for the impending concerns brought on by several storms and Hurricane Lili, not to mention the intermittent rain in between. The delegation, as I know I mentioned in an earlier article, was very supportive. They advised that they would await our request once we could ascertain the losses and determine what might be achievable. Well, while there are still questions in our minds as to what the real numbers are out there, we are in a position of needing to respond to the political climate that is now this disaster-bill frenzy today (January 16), in Washington. We believe that we are meeting success with our request as we have been included in several disaster proposals that are moving to the floor of the Senate. The big question out there today is which bill will be the final bill to win passage and how might it be amended during the process. It is our hope that we will end as we are starting in all of these legislative instruments in which we are included. But two things: One, it is a legislative process and the instrument is always subject to change; and two, this is just on the Senate side and it will be in an uphill battle when disaster aid moves to the House side of the Hill. It is my hope that the two chambers go to a conference on the Senate bill after passage. Only time will tell.

However, it is comforting to know that there are people in Washington who truly care about this industry and its people and are working hard for you and your best interests. The League will keep you updated and informed. But I feel very comfortable, on this date of writing, suggesting that help may well be on its way for you that have suffered so tremendously this year. Keep the faith as we will continue to work in your best interests.

New Acreage

There have been many discussions about cane and sugar from land with no history. There always seems to be a desire by some to expand acreage (which is a common desire), while we all either know or hear how the political and other "landscape" will look, but then insisting on trying to bend or change the rules at every opportunity. And to be perfectly honest, in a perfect world we would hope and wish for everyone to have your cake and eat it too. However, the present Farm Bill Sugar Title establishes history and base and does have something that is referred to as "proportionate shares." As cumbersome a system as some may think it to be, it was put into place to support those who have been engaged in the cane farming business. And while some of you who have been in the business for years and some of you who may have acquired land recently that does not have history, we all knew that the potential for not selling the sugar from those acres was a distinct possibility. The reality is, it is here. There will be enough trials and tribulations involved with the transition to a balanced market that allows for stable and better pricing for our product. And while no one wishes for anyone to invest in something and not make a return or a profit — and by many it could be considered practically un-American — it is necessary to accept the new rules and realize that we have to live by them. It was devised with a purpose. That is, to keep the Louisiana and US sugar industry viable and profitable. No more. No less.

Mother Nature, regretfully, has taken care of our concern for our over-allotment sugar. The unfortunate situation is that we no longer have to worry about when we might sell that sugar that was supposed to have to carry over on "the floor", but how do we manage to survive through this disaster of 2002 and the concern for 2003? Additionally, Louisiana is not in the sugar business alone. If, in fact, we were the only producers of sugar in this country, we'd have one of two certain situations. The first and most optimistic situation would be that we could get anything and everything each and every farmer felt we should have from our government. Or, the second scenario and probably the one that would dominate, would be that we would have been out of business a long time ago. The

dynamics of the US sugar market is such that we are only "players" and not "controllers." There is much more that moves this market and its price than just one individual or one state. But if rules are not set to establish and enforce discipline, it could well provide for a disastrous situation for an industry, economy, market or all simultaneously. Some people in the past gambled on expansion and were lucky and won. But that does not mean that history repeats itself or that the market can allow everyone to "cheat" a little. Neither I nor anyone designing and helping to write this last farm bill was looking for anything but better times and better prices for our product. What we have in law should give us that opportunity in theory. But, we will all have to work to make sure it happens in reality.

As in everything in life, there is no guarantee. This industry, in conjunction with the other sectors of the US sugar industry, have to continue to work together and realize what the final objective is to be, and everyone needs to do their part to achieve this goal. Like any team sport, it takes all players working together and playing by the same rules to make for a successful season. Our "season" has another four years to run (next farm bill). In the meantime, we need to work together to make this good legislation evolve and be hopeful that we will be fortunate enough to get another farm bill that will allow us the opportunity to stay in business and make a profit.

I know that this past harvest was not a fun one and was trying on everyone, but I hope all of your families and loved one are in good health.

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Mexico Dispute
New Faces and Old Problems Likely To Affect Farm Spending
USDA Adjusts OAQ and Plans To Sell Sugar Stocks
USDA WASDE January Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The US government still insists that no agreement has been reached, despite signs that the two governments have settled on the text of an agreement. The delay in announcing an agreement has been linked in the press to resistance from the opposition party in Mexico and press reports suggest that the Mexican government hopes to lay the groundwork for an announcement closer to the March 2003 convening of the Mexican legislature. Passage of legislation to eliminate the soda tax has been seen as a first step in implementing an agreement.

Senator Mary Landrieu met with USTR Ambassador Allen Johnson in mid-January to request the details of the impending agreement. In that meeting, Senator Landrieu urged Johnson to cooperate in consultations with interested Members of Congress and affected industry requesting consultations as per the consultative terms detailed in legislation approving Trade Promotion Authority for the Administration. Shortly after the Landrieu meeting, a briefing was organized for the Senate Sweetener Caucus staff to update them on events since the holidays.

Jackie Theriot and the other members of the industry's Mexico Task Force (MTF) continue to seek the details as well. Counsel for the MTF were in late December allowed access to incomplete documents outlining the agreement, but the main points of contention were not included in this review. The MTF in January repeated its call for substantive consultations with the industry before an agreement is finalized.

New Faces and Old Problems Likely To Affect Farm Spending

The 108th session of Congress was convened in early January, with many familiar faces gone from their ranks. Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) was awarded the chairmanship of the House Committee on Agriculture and began the complicated process of organizing the committee with a dearth of experienced leaders to rely on in the subcommittee slots. Including retiring Chairman Larry Combest (R-TX), four of the six leaders of the committee during the preceding legislative session have left the committee, leaving Goodlatte, and Rep. Frank Lucus (R-OK) to reassemble the committee. Rep. Terry Everett has given up his subcommittee chair to take a leadership position on the Armed Services Committee, joining Rep. Richard Pombo in a lateral move within the House. Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) also left a subcommittee chairmanship open when he won the Georgia Senate race.

At the time of this writing, the House committee structure was in a state of flux as various other Members weigh leadership positions in other committees. It seems likely

that the subcommittee chairs for the coming session will come from a mix of the following Representatives: Frank Lucas (R-OK), Jerry Moran (R-KS), Bill Jenkins (R-TN), Gil Gutknecht (R-MN) and Doug Ose (R-CA). Jenkins and Ose are the likely candidates to head the specialty crops subcommittee having jurisdiction over the sugar program, although both are considering leadership slots on other committees that could prevent them from taking this subcommittee slot.

Senator Cochran's dual role as Chairman of the Senate's agricultural committee and the agricultural appropriations subcommittee paid quick dividends for southern producers during the early going on disaster assistance. Cochran's staff put together a disaster package for Appropriations Chairman Ted Stevens (R-AK) that included assistance for the Louisiana sugar industry along with a disaster payment system patterned on the AMTA payments paid to program crop producers under the 1996 farm bill. The bill included across-the-board cuts in all government spending as an offset and Cochran vowed to fight against any attempts to tighten payment limits as a way to offset any disaster measures.

Such an amendment could come from Senators Chuck Hagel (R-NE) and Chuck Grassley (R-IA), who had earlier introduced a disaster bill with offsetting budgetary savings linked to tightening the payment limits to farmers. Their proposal included a reduction in the total payment cap for all entities and that amount would be at $225,000, with direct payments capped at $35,000, counter-cyclical payments at $60,000 and LDP/Marketing Loan Gains at $130,000 (with generic certificates counted against the cap). The $50,000 exemption for spouses actively engaged in the farm would also be eliminated. According to CBO, the Hagel-Grassley bill, with these offsetting changes, would save $2.5 billion over 10 years.

USDA Adjusts OAQ and Plans To Sell Sugar Stocks

On January 10, USDA announced plans to sell the CCC inventory of refined (22,418 tons) and raw sugar (153,239 tons) to increase the supply of sugar available in the domestic market. Tenders were expected to be released in the last half of January.

USDA also announced at that time that, effective immediately, the overall allotment quantity (OAQ) would be increased by 500,000 short tons (raw value) to 8.2 million short tons, with the new beet allotment at 4.457 million short tons and the cane allotment at 3.743 million. USDA released another notice in mid-January showing changes to the processor allocations based on the OAQ announcement and some changes in production forecasts. There are indications that the Department may consider increasing the OAQ again in February.

USDA WASDE January Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its January World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Beginning stocks were reduced to 1,276,000 short tons (raw value) from 1,288,000. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 fell by 100,000 to 8,155,000 short tons (raw value), due to a smaller than expected 2002 beet crop of 4,215,000 tons. The 2001/02 overall production and cane production estimates remained unchanged at 7,906,000 tons and 3,992,000 tons, respectively. 2001/02 and 2002/03 non-program imports were unchanged at 81,000 and 60,000 tons, respectively, while imports under re-export were increased by 40,000 to 300,000 tons, with only 20,000 of that total showing up on the re-export side in the form of products. This brought the 2002/03 total imports estimate to 1,605,000 from 1,565,000 tons. Louisiana cane sugar production for 2001/02 remained at 1,587,000, while 2002/03 fell another 80,000 to 1,340,000 short tons, but another increase in Florida offset the reductions in Louisiana. The amount of 2001/02 sugar held by CCC was unchanged at 212,000 tons. Ending stocks rose to 1,311,000 from 1,203,000 short tons last month. 2002/03 stocks-to-use ratio was increased to 13.5 percent from 12.7 percent last month. For 2001/02, the stocks-to-use estimate was reduced slightly to 12.3 percent from 12.5 percent.

ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

2002/03 Harvest Season
Removing Standing Water - Seed Increase Program

Historically the quality of cane at the end of harvest decreases due to poor weather and field conditions. However, weather and field conditions for the last two or three weeks of the 2002–2003 crop have steadily improved and have perhaps become the best of the whole season. Sugar tests reported by core samplers are indicating that the quality of the cane deliveries has steadily increased with dry weather. Drying field conditions along with cooler daytime and night temperatures have helped to decrease the number of high dextran reports.

Almost all of the mills in the Bayou/River Region have completed harvest operations. Even though several of these mills were running at a very slow speed, field conditions were so poor that growers were unable to harvest cane at a rate that could keep them open. Due to the inability of growers to harvest some fields and to deliver their daily quotas, mills were forced to close and leave growers with cane unharvested. With the lack of rain every three days or so, growers have been able to return to fields that they were expecting to leave unharvested. Deliveries of cane from the Raceland area are now finding their way to mills in the New Iberia area. At the writing of this article, both Sterling Sugars and the Enterprise factories were reporting that they would continue to process cane through January 22, 2003. Until then, they will process as much outside cane as possible.

Removing Standing Water

Removing the standing water from fields should be a number one project for growers in the upcoming days after harvest. Test data have indicated significant loses in tonnage when fields of LCP 85-384 remain poorly drained during the winter months. One of the problems of running drains in wet muddy fields is that as the drain cleaner cuts the drain, it will leave a plug of soil in the row. This plug of soil prevents the water in the rows from draining out through the newly run drain. In discussions with Bobby Judice of Frank Martin Farms in Franklin, LA, he mentioned that they had modified their drain cleaner by removing its deflection shield (picture #1). The shield was modified so that it pivots and can be adjusted to different angles. According to Bobby when field conditions are extremely muddy, the more the shield can be tilted back, the less mud will collect and falloff back into the drain or water furrow. The extra set of knives that they added seems to cut through the trash and stalks of cane left after harvest. After the deflection shield has been removed wet soil does not buildup, fall back into the row, and prevent it from draining. This does not totally prevent the plugging of the rows, but under the worst of field conditions, the modification seems to reduce the number of plugged rows by sixty to seventy percent. There are no apparent problems caused by the removal of the shield, other than the soil and mud that are slung all over the tractor used to run the drains. The tractor operator must have a cab or he will be unable to stand the rain of soil and mud.

Nearly all fields were harvested after two tropical storms and under wet field conditions, leaving much scrap and litter debris that has to be contended with during cultivation and

fertilization. Additionally, there are unharvested fields that must be shredded. Very little of this residue will have time to decompose before growers must begin spring cultivation and, not long after that, fertilization. Even after numerous cultivations to fill in holes, establish drainage, and to chop up stalks of unharvested cane, it will be very difficult to apply fertilizer at the proper depth in the row. Another problem is buildup of trash on the fertilizer applicator's picks. One means of application of fertilizer in fields with a lot of trash, which was used by Ronnie Gonsoulin of New Iberia, LA during 2002 is illustrated in picture #2. The disks slice through all types of trash, clearing the way for the fertilizer picks to follow. Very little trash is collected on the fertilizer applicator's shanks as they pass through leaf trash and unharvested stalks of cane.

Picture 1

Picture 2

Seed Increase Program

There have been a few growers questioning why the League still maintains its traditional seed increase program and does not use cellular regeneration to increase new varieties. One of the main reasons the seed increase program has not changed is because there is always the possibility that the variety will be changed during cellular regeneration. These changes (off types) in a variety can range from obvious to unrecognizable changes. When the cellular regenerated version of CP 65- 357 was tested in the Outfield, it had a very pointed top, much as CP 72-370 (the pineapple cane.) When increased by cellular regeneration, the phenotypic characteristics of CP 70-321 were changed very little, other than a reduction in barrel size and an increase in population. However, when walking seed plots which were planted from a cellular regenerated source, there were stretches that were heavily infested with tall-growing smut stools. However, in fields planted with original seed from the variety increase program, only an occasional stool of short-growing smut was found.

By changing, the procedures used during the regeneration processes many of the problems of numbers and quality of plantlets can be corrected. However, the folks at Kleentek® report that occasionally they still have batches of LCP 85-384 plantlets that will have nearly 50% off types. To prevent these off types from getting to the grower, the plantlets must be rogued very closely and any stool of question must be thrown out.

Because of the possibility that a non-phenotypic characteristic of a variety such as disease and insect resistance, cold tolerance or sugar production could be altered and go undetected, the variety release program and the League's increase program have remained with the vegetativly reproduced seed supply. With (1) improvements in the reliability of test results for rsd, (2) heat treating of new varieties before they are sent to primary stations, and (3) improved sanitary procedures when the seed is being cut for replant, growers can be assured that they are receiving healthy high quality seed from the secondary stations.

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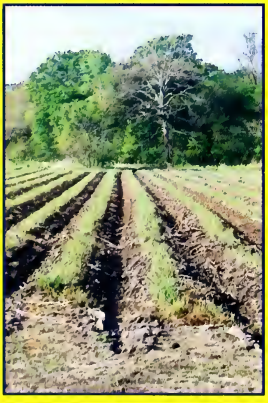

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Prowl 2 qt./acre — itchgrass, seedling johnsongrass

OR

Prowl .75 - 1.25 qt./acre — (These rates are more weather dependent and need a cleaner row top. Use higher rates if ash is present.) Seedling johnsongrass, browntop panicum, broadleaf signalgrass, and annual grass.

B. Broadleaf Herbicide:

Direx 80DF - 1.8 lbs./acre

OR

Atrazine - 3 pts./acre

OR

Sencor - 1/2, 2/3, 3/4 lbs./acre (rate dependent on weed pressure)

OR

***Spartan - 2.35 - 4 ozs./acre (*pending label)**

C. Burndown Herbicide as needed for winter weeds:

Weedmaster - 1 pt./acre - 2 pt./acre — Rate is dependent on weed pressure, weed species, size of winter weeds, density of the weeds, annual or perennials and which broadleaf herbicide is in the tank mix.

D. Surfactant

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Wetlands Update

Farmers today are facing wetlands issues that their forefathers never encountered or could reasonably have foreseen. In their forefather's day, a farmer was free to do as he pleased with his lands, whether that land was wet or dry, so long as that usage did not cause a public nuisance. Farming is a far more complicated matter today. An innocent intrusion by today's farmer on lands that are arbitrarily determined to be "wetlands" can accrue financial disaster. The entrenched wetlands regulatory system in this country is environmentalist oriented, and environmentalists aim to control all land use and their preferred uses do not include farming or other private residential, commercial, or industrial uses.

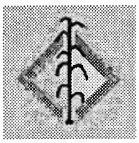
Consider the case of a California farmer who plowed four acres of "seasonal wetlands" while converting grazing land to vineyards and orchards (*The Advocate* of 12/11/02). No bulldozer, backhoe or other earthmoving equipment was used - only the farmer's "deep ripper" plow. That farmer challenged $500,000 in fines and an order to restore four acres of wetlands. Unfortunately, a tie vote by the U.S. Supreme Court affirms a 9th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling in this case (*The Advocate* of 12/17/02). This indicates that not only is the nation's wetlands regulatory system crazy, but that the entire justice system, including the Supreme Court, is also in need of major repairs.

The current wetlands situation began with the nascent environmental movement of the 1960s. Lawsuits were filed compelling enforcement of a long-forgotten statute enacted in the 1890s that requires the Army Corps of Engineers to establish rules protecting harbors and navigable waterways from obstruction by structures and pollutants. The Clean Water Act of 1972 established an EPA administered program (NPDES) requiring permits for all wastewater discharges to "Waters of the United States," implicitly "navigable" waterways. Then again, lawsuits in environmentalist friendly Federal Courts had "navigable" declared to be any stream that could float a log after a rainstorm, including wetlands and intermittent streams draining to them, and associated drainage ditches. Accordingly, the EPA and Corps of Engineers have seized total control of any lands they say are wet, whether or not these lands are actually wet or serve any environmentally beneficial purpose. The California farmer's case is a perfect example of the situation.

There is now a small bit of good news on the wetlands situation. A 2001 Supreme Court ruling denied Clean Water Act protection to isolated, non-navigable ponds and wetlands contained in a single state. The January 11, 2003 *Washington Post* reported a January 10, 2003 announcement by the Bush Administration that, pursuant to the 2001 Supreme Court ruling, new guidelines are being issued by the EPA and Corps of Engineers that would shift responsibility from the Federal Government to the states for regulating as much as 20 percent of the 100 million acres of wetlands

in the lower 48 states. This is a big step in the right direction, but environmentalists are outraged and will undoubtably attempt to undermine implementation.

No one seems to know what benefit, if any, these new guidelines will be to Louisiana sugar cane farmers. At this time, the only safe thing is to assume that nothing is changed. Assume that all marginal croplands are "wet", and if not planted in crops for five continuous years may become wetlands regulated by the Feds. Cane farm land owners should ascertain that any such marginal farmlands taken out of production because of a reduced allotment or other reason are replanted and cultivated before the "five year rule" kicks in. How many cane farmers can afford a half million dollar fine and loss of useful acreage?



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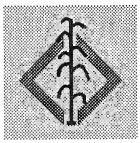

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THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

Governor's Race Getting Crowded

The 2003 Governor's race is beginning to look more like the start of Boston Marathon than a political race with more and more candidates edging up to the starting tape. With Mike Foster's two-term limit moving him to the sideline, a crowd unlike anything seen since the late 70's is forming at the starting line. After Edwin Edwards retired the first time after terms in '72 and '76, a dozen hopefuls threatened to run but only seven actually filed. Dave Treen beat Louis Lambert by less than one vote per precinct.

That was the start of a run of one-term-governors: Treen followed by Edwards (again) followed by Roemer, followed by Edwards (again), followed by two-termer Foster. Most of this crop of gubernatorial candidates hope Foster has started a new streak of two-termers.

The 2003 version of the governor's race got an early start with an actual ad campaign beginning several months ago, the earliest start anyone can remember, when Buddy Leach was the first to step up to the plate. Leach is a Democrat and he is joined on that side of the slate with fellow democrats Kathleen Blanco, Richard Ieyoub, William Jefferson, John Kennedy and Randy Ewing. Republicans lined up, or threatening to line up, are Dave Treen, Ken Hollis, John Hainkel and Hunt Downer.

Others may show up. Sally Clausen who is currently President of the University of Louisiana System has been mentioned but she is fired up about the things she has going on in the education field, a lifelong passion. Clausen is a Democrat. Several more Republicans are testing the wind. Jay Blossman, Chairman of Public Service Commission is actively seeking input and is said to be very interested. Governor Foster is urging supporters to consider Bobby Jindal. Foster became a Jindal fan after he hired him to run the Department of Health and Hospitals during Foster's first term. Jindal has an eye-poping resume and an even more impressive intellect and at the age of 31 is being shopped around by the Governor.

One other Republican has been "run up the flag pole" to see who will salute. Legislative Auditor Dan Kyle is considering the race. He has a squeaky clean image as Louisiana's premiere corruption buster and an MBA and a Ph.D. in accounting, but he has some liabilities. He has never run for office (in a way that could be a plus) so he has no organization to get him out there. He also has spent a decade and a half busting D.A.s, mayors, clerks of court and other members of the "court house crowd" who still can be inspired to turn out the vote for their candidate. And then there is Bob Odom who feels very strongly that Kyle picked on him. Odom is still very strong.

This spring will provide a forum for all of these aspiring Governors to try to find a resonant chord with the voters. It will be hard work. Poll after poll shows the people want more spending on roads, education, coastal erosion, pay raises . . . on and on. The polls also show that about the only other issue they feel that strongly about is not raising taxes. A conundrum Foster has been chafing over for years.

More money in state revenue in this populist state may have to come from business rather than households. An old pundit once said "a government funded by robbing Peter to pay Paul can count on the support of Paul."

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DuPont™ K-4™ – A New Tool for a Classic Crop

As Louisiana growers celebrate 200 years of sugarcane farming, DuPont™ introduces K-4™ sugarcane herbicide, a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron in a single, water dispersible product. Now registered by the EPA, the new product offers the same broad-spectrum weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides.

In field research over the past two years, K-4™ provided excellent residual control of grass and broadleaf weeds when applied during the fallow period as well as in the cane crop when applied at-planting and in the spring. Dr. Ed Richard, lead research agronomist with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service, and Dr. Jim Griffin, weed scientist with the LSU AgCenter worked with DuPont™ to evaluate weed control spectrum and the optimum application timing for K-4™.

Richard began testing K-4™ in the fall of 2000. He applied Velpar® L mixed with diuron for the control of seedling johnsongrass, browntop panicum, and the supression of bermudagrass. "We looked at different varieties to see if there were variations in tolerance to the mixture," Richard says. "We saw very good levels of weed control with K-4™ with no crop injury." Griffin has also seen good tolerance of LCP85-384 when multiple applications of K-4™ were made in the plant cane crop.

Growing Cycle and K-4™ Applications

"K-4™ has been especially effective when applied in the spring when sugarcane begins to emerge from the winter dormant period," Griffin explains. "This time of the year is critical from the standpoint of control because weeds emerging early in the season compete with the crop for nutrients and space. Ideally, preventing weeds from ever emerging with the use of an effective soil-applied herbicide would promote maximum early season tillering of the sugarcane and yield at harvest time."

Since LCP85-384 has such good ratooning ability, growers in Louisiana can get anywhere from four to six harvests from a single planting. "Diseases, weeds, and insects can take their toll over the years, and as stands of cane start to thin it's time to consider replanting," Griffin continues. "It is during the fallow period when K-4™ has looked especially impressive."

Using herbicides rather than tillage to keep the seedbeds free of weeds helps to retain moisture, which is beneficial to the planted cane. "K-4™ can also be applied immediately after planting," Griffin says. "This helps to assure that the cane will get off to a good start and that weeds will not reestablish before winter sets in."

K-4™ Advantages

Richard observed good suppression of browntop panicum, seedling johnsongrass, morningglory and bermudagrass. "I see K-4™ as a good broad-spectrum herbicide," he says. "It picks up seedling johnsongrass and most other seedling grasses and suppresses bermudagrass in the field. K-4™ also has good activity on the scarlet or red morningglory species, especially when compared to conventional treatments such as atrazine."

Griffin observes: "Another advantage of K-4™ is that we are using one material, out of one container, to provide complete weed control. Growers will not need to add anything to it. Also, it's a dry flowable formulation, which means that there should be fewer problems for the mixers and loaders with the rinsing of containers."

Both Griffin and Richard agree the new DuPont™ dispersible granule XP formulation is easy to measure and place in the tank. "K-4™ is odorless and will not stain equipment," notes Griffin. "These characteristics can be important especially when applications are made near populated areas."

Green Cane Harvesting

Typically, sugarcane shuck matter is burned off after harvest and a blanket of residue is left. But burning often suppresses emergence of next year's cane. "Just how long we will have that practice in Louisiana, Texas and Florida is hard to say," says Richard. "We have subdivisions cropping up into our farming areas. It's very difficult to burn crops and not have the smoke and the ashes fall into an inhabited area. Because of this, a lot of our emphasis has gone towards green cane harvesting."

Richard finds that use of a broad-spectrum herbicide like K-4™ coupled with proper cultivation improves results from green cane harvesting. "You don't bring that weed residue to the factories where sugarcane stalks are crushed to remove the juice," he explains. "So you can have a greater increase in sugar recovery because there is less leaf matter in the mix."

Stepping Up to the Plate

Over the last five years, the Louisiana sugarcane industry has undergone dramatic changes. They include:

- use of LCP85-384 sugarcane variety on 85% of fields.
- the advent of green cane harvesting.
- introduction of reduced tillage practices.

"The green cane harvesting system doesn't require that rows are high," Richard notes. "It's a flat row now, which lends itself to less tillage. The bottom line is: the less you cultivate, the more dollars you keep in your pockets."

Herbicide treatments have to step up to the plate, he adds. "With reduced tillage, we have to go from band applications to broadcast," he says. "We need something like K-4™ that will be effective as a broadcast application on the spectrum of weeds that emerge in our fields."

DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide is a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron that provides the same broad spectrum of weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF in a single, convenient water dispersible product.

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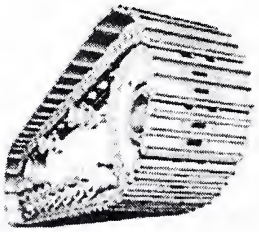

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Don't forget to return your RSVP card in the center of this issue of *The Sugar Bulletin* by February 24, 2003 to reserve your seat for lunch at the Eightieth Annual Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League. High Yield Awards will also be given at this meeting.

Wednesday

March 5, 2003

10:00 a.m.
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See Page 3 For Details

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Volume 81, No. 6 **March 2003**

THE SUGAR BULLETIN

Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

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2	Karmex 80 DF	2.2 lb /A	37 b
3	**Velpar 2 L + Karmex 80 DF**	**1 qt /A + 2.2 lb /A**	**89 a**
4	**Prowl 3 EC**	**4 qt /A**	**95 a**
5	Sencor 75 DF	1.5 lb /A	42 b
6	Atrazine 90 DF	2 lb ai/A	-22 d
7	Spartan 75 DF	5 oz /A	39 b
8	Spartan 75 DF	8 oz /A	57 b
9	Spartan 75 DF	12 oz /A	86 a
10	Non Treated	0 c	
LSD (P=.05)		20.1	
Standard Deviation		13.8	
CV		27.45	
Replicate F		0.054	
Replicate Prob (F)		0.9831	
Treatment Prob (F)		0.0001	

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

League Success
Disaster Assistance

Well, quite frankly, this past year has been a roller coaster of sorts for the domestic and Louisiana sugar industry. But then as I have noted in the past, there are many more issues facing Louisiana sugar, domestic sugar, and for that matter, all of American agriculture. When I came to the League some ten (10) years ago, Pete DeGravelle's words to me was that I would really enjoy this job. And to that comment by Pete, I agree. But his finishing statement that other than a farm bill every five years and just minor issues in between, I should have plenty of time to spend visiting the people of our industry and get to know all of them better and understand their respective concerns. Well, Pete, the industry has not lacked for major issues, it seems continuously, throughout this period since I arrived. I do, however, regret that I have not had the time I would like to be out amongst the membership, as that to me is something that I know I would enjoy, just as I did enjoy being among my constituents when in elective office.

And, although it has been a period of time with many issues, controversial, non-controversial, complicated, relatively simple, and what have you, it seems to have passed ever so quickly. I am not sure how I might have handled having "time" on my hands. I guess I will never know.

League Success

I have spoken to groups that have asked about the League's ability to accomplish tasks and overcome adversity. My first response is that I didn't invent the "mode of operation" under which the League's strength lies. It came from our predecessors in this industry. There is a document hanging on the wall of the League's office that I found and had preserved just several months after coming to the League. It was the typed and signed agreement from 1922 when the League was founded by varying groups of cane folks, growers and millers, from throughout the state's sugar producing areas. That, unto itself, was probably a remarkable accomplishment. Competition between mills and grower groups was very keen. However, the common thread was survival of an industry. Not survival for one, either miller or grower, but for the industry itself.

As I write this column, I think about Mr. Gilbert Durbin, my Dad, Mr. Bronier Thibaut, Sonny Thibaut and others who were my early links to the sugar industry. How would they grade their League now? How would they grade me? How would they grade all of you who are members of this organization for whom the

League exists? Those questions, I guess, may remain mostly unanswered because of the passing of many who did the work of the League as we do now. Some, however, are still around. Maybe that is a task I can undertake in my spare time!

I look back and firmly believe that we have weathered some severe confrontations and issues. Don't expect that some issues that still linger will go away anytime soon. But what I ask of you — and I don't believe this to be any different than what I asked some ten years ago on first coming to the League — is that we keep ourselves focused on what is good for the industry. Many people in many organizations try to influence policy with what is good for their own best interests, and that is an understandable human reaction or response. But when I look back at directives and objectives that I am asked to accomplish on behalf of the League (industry), my first thought every time is how do we accomplish the task where the interest of the "industry", or at least the majority of the Louisiana sugar industry, is best served? If everyone involved — and I encourage everyone to be involved — would use that single question when discussing issues, it would make for a more focused industry effort as we progress into this new millennium.

I guess my point is that many want to second guess and/or attempt to influence policy, many times after the fact and often times without all the facts. I can assure you that your leadership and I are attempting to explore all possibilities on all issues before acting on each. We may make some mistakes, but I have never maintained that I was perfect. But please know that your League and I are ever mindful of attempting to act in your industry's best interest. Please trust your leadership. The League committee system for handling issues has worked well for this industry, but it is necessary for the industry to place "your" faith in it!

Disaster Assistance

This past year has been helacious for all of you in many ways. The exhaustion of the harvest, physically and mentally, is still evident in many of your faces. I commend you for your courage in light of the challenges you faced during this harvest season. The smiles and ability to joke are returning. For that, I am truly grateful.

As the season progressed, I received an increasing number of calls inquiring about disaster assistance. The debate over disaster assistance in Washington was one that many on the hill did not even want to discuss much less debate. However, a bill finally materialized. It started out as a bill that would benefit all of agriculture that was harmed by adverse weather, including hurricanes, droughts, freezes and other natural disasters. Regretfully, it didn't finish that way. The debate, as Macon Edwards so aptly puts it, "got above the pay grade of everyone involved outside of the elected officials." The debate was not about whether corn, rice, beans, cattle or any other commodity was deserving, but rather how much money was available, from where would it be derived, who would be the recipients, were they deserving, and other political considerations that may not be thought to pertain directly to us, but it darn well affects us all, individually and collectively.

To those legislators who helped as best that they could under the circumstances, the League and the industry thank you for your concern and efforts. The entire Louisiana delegation pitched in, led in the House by senior member, Billy Tauzin and, on the Senate side, by our two Senators, Breaux and Landrieu. To all we owe our thanks. The Louisiana delegation is as good and as strong a delegation as any state might ask.

Additionally, I would personally like to express my appreciation to Mississippi Senator Thad Cochran for taking a stand for all of American agriculture. He did not get all that he wished for in his budget resolution for cotton, rice, beans and some other commodities, but he fought a valiant fight. We are especially lucky that we were successful in getting money for our industry, but it would never have happened, I do not believe, if the good Senator from Mississippi had not taken this disaster assistance legislation on as a personal challenge. To him, and on behalf of this industry, I will always be thankful.

WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Louisiana Sugar Industry Gets $60 Million in Disaster Package
Agriculture Subcomittee Chairs Named - Mexico Dispute
FTA's Efforts Hold Perils for US Sugar Industry
USDA WASDE February Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

Congress approved an omnibus budget bill in mid-February that includes $3.1 billion in disaster assistance. The package includes:

- $2.115 billion in targeted disaster assistance to program crop producers
- $365 million for livestock assistance
- $250 million for emergency surplus removal for specialty crops
- $54 million for tobacco producers
- $50 million in cottonseed assistance
- $120 million for assistance to sugar producers - $60 million each for LA hurricane assistance and beet producers
- $10 million for Rio Grande growers suffering water shortages
- $2 million for New Mexico producers related to pesticides misapplications
- $18 million for citrus canker assistance
- $15 million for bovine TB eradication
- $15 million for administrative funding for farm bill and disaster implementation

The entire $3.1 billion cost is offset by capping funding for the Conservation Security Program (CSP), an integrated conservation program included in the 2002 farm bill by former Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Tom Harkin (D-IA). While the Senate's Republican leadership has committed to working with Harkin to restore the CSP funding at a later date, the cuts in CSP could lead Harkin and other Midwestern Senators to reinvigorate efforts to tighten payment limits on future legislative vehicles.

The $60 million directed to Louisiana hurricane assistance for the sugar industry reflects the hard work of Louisiana's Democratic Senators John Breaux and Mary Landrieu, solidly supported by Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-LA) and the entire House delegation. It also reflects the efforts of the industry to build key friendships outside the sugar-growing area. While the $60 million cannot completely offset the losses caused by the storms of late 2002, this assistance will help put producers and first-processors back on solid ground as we move into the 2004 marketing year.

Agriculture Subcommittee Chairs Named

The Senate Agriculture Committee appointed Members to subcommittees in early February. The Subcommittee on Production and Price Competitiveness, with jurisdiction over program crops and sugar, will be chaired by freshman Senator Elizabeth Dole (R-NC). Others serving on the subcommittee include Senators: Mitch McConnell (R-KY), Pat Roberts (R-KS), Saxby

Chambliss (R-GA), Norm Coleman (R-MN), Charles Grassley (R-IA), Kent Conrad (D-ND, ranking Democrat), Tom Daschle (D-SD, Senate Minority Leader), Zell Miller (D-GA), Max Baucus (D-MT, ranking Democratic member of the Senate Finance Committee) and Blanche Lincoln (D-AR). In addition to Senator Dole, new members of the full committee include Senators Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), Norm Coleman (R-MN), Mike Crapo (R-ID) and Jim Talent (R-MO). In addition, Senator Chuck Grassley (R-IA, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee) returns to the committee.

In the House, Agriculture Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) announced subcommittee chairman in early February. Rep. Bill Jenkins (R-TN) will chair the specialty crops and foreign agriculture programs subcommittee, with jurisdiction over the sugar program. Rep. Jerry Moran (R-KS) will head the general farm commodities subcommittee. Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK) will chair the conservation, credit, rural development and research subcommittee. Rep. Gil Gutknecht (R-MN) will lead the department operations oversight, nutrition and forestry subcommittee and Rep. Robin Hayes (R-NC) will head the livestock and horticulture subcommittee.

While the Democrats have not announced the full slate of House committee members, we are pleased that Rep. Rodney Alexander (D-LA) will join the committee and are hopeful that he will gain a seat on the specialty crops subcommittee as well. We also understand that Rep. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND) has been awarded a waiver to allow him to continue serving on the agriculture committee, where he has been a strong supporter of US sugar policy for many years.

Mexico Dispute

There has been little or no activity on the Mexico sweetener dispute in recent weeks due to the changes to the Mexican Administration and upcoming legislative elections. While there has been much in the press regarding farmer unrest in Mexico, this has not been sugar-specific and, on the contrary, involves concerns about a host of tariff changes affecting trade in other commodities.

FTA's Efforts Hold Perils For US Sugar Industry

In recent weeks, the Administration has announced plans to pursue a number of free trade agreements in Central America, Chile, Singapore, Australia and others. USTR Bob Zoellick's announcement of textile concessions in the Administration's negotiating offer at the Free Trade Area of the America's (FTAA) should sound an alarm bell in sugar circles. Trade consultants for the industry are increasingly concerned that USTR plans NAFTA-like transitions for sugar trade in each of the free trade negotiations, meaning a possible 10-15 year transition to free trade.

The Central American Free Trade Agreement will be the first trade pact completed and sent to Congress for approval. If the Administration determines that congressional votes on these free trade agreements will not be as contentious as NAFTA, trade officials may believe that there is more flexibility to negotiate access to the US sugar market in return for concessions in other areas. Since these agreements are subject to up-or-down votes under Trade Promotion Authority, the provisions will not be subject to amendment. Under such a scenario, the strategic importance of sugar-state members is reduced and procedural avenues for blocking specific provisions are virtually eliminated. Now is the time for the industry and our friends in Congress to become actively engaged in the negotiating process, rather than waiting until a signed agreement is delivered to Capitol Hill.

USDA WASDE February Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its February World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 rose slightly more than 100,000 tons to 8,260,000 short tons (raw value) due to higher sugar extraction rates in the beet sector and a 20,000 ton increase in Louisiana's production estimate due to stronger than expected production in September. Beet production for 2002/03 was increased to 4,300,000 tons from 4,215,000 in January. The 2001/02 overall

production and cane production estimates remained unchanged at 7,906,000 tons and 3,992,000 tons, respectively. 2001/02 and 2002/03 non-program imports were also unchanged at 81,000 and 60,000 tons, respectively, as were imports under re-export at 300,000 tons. This left the 2002/03 total imports estimate at 1,605,000 tons. Louisiana cane sugar production for 2001/02 remained at 1,587,000, while 2002/03 rose by 20,000 to 1,360,000 short tons. The amount of 2001/02 sugar held by CCC was unchanged at 212,000 tons. Ending stocks rose to 1,311,000 from 1,203,000 short tons last month. 2002/03 stocks-to-use ratio was increased to 14.6 percent from 13.5 percent last month. For 2001/02, the stocks-to-use estimate was unchanged at 12.3 percent.

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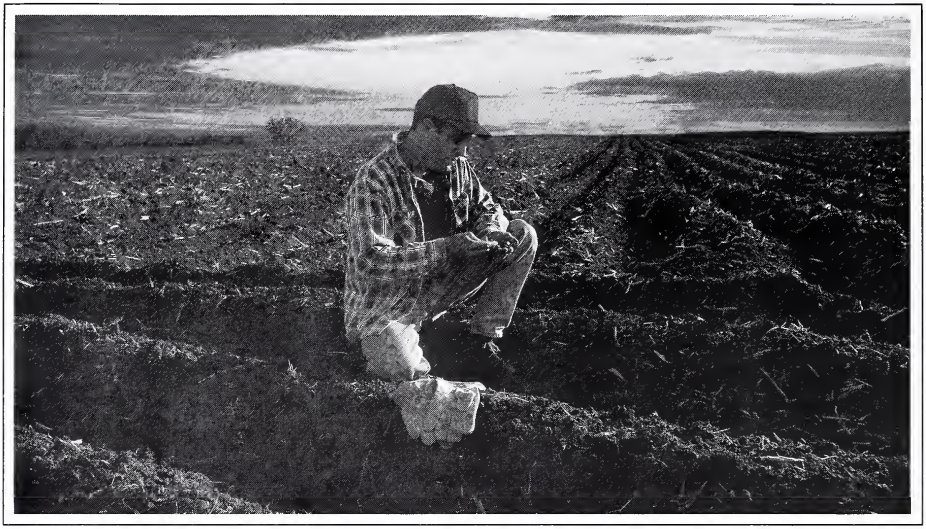

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By Windell Jackson

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Don't Plow too quickly - Report Acres - Atrazine
HoCP 96-540 - 2002 Production Data

The tentative date for the ASCL's Contact Committee Meeting has been set for June 18, 2003. The reason for this early mention is in the hope that members of the industry will suggest topics of concern that can be presented at this year's meeting. The industry is facing many problems following one of the worst harvests in at least the last 30 years. Suggestions for timely and informational topics for the meeting should be forwarded to the League's staff.

With most of January dry, there are a number of growers who were able to do a fair amount of work in their fields. Some of the less rutted fields and fairly deeply rutted fields (which were drained during harvest) have been cultivated and many of the holes in them have been filled. On the Teche, some of those growers who completed harvest early in January were able to go back to work in their fields, and a few have reported that they have been able to cultivate all but the most severely rutted fields, and much repair has been accomplished on the headlands. With the dry weather during the last of January, some of the old residue has been clipped and a few acres of the yellow herbicides have been applied. However, the 0.3 to 1.5 inches of rain this weekend of February 8, put a stop to most of the fieldwork.

The 2003 harvest may be very short, especially if growers plow out cane fields that could have made good yields, but were slow in coming back. As usual, growers are eager to plow out fields, and as usual, they are reminded not to plow too quickly. The fields that were treated with Polado, especially those that were harvested long past the date at which they were scheduled for harvest-or not harvested at all, will be very slow re-growing in the spring. It is the opinion of most researchers that although stands of long term Polado-treated cane will certainly be reduced (they are not sure to what extent), most concur that the stands should be adequate to keep in a year like this one. Because of the effect of plowing excessive acreage, the water-damaged fields of planted cane that must be replanted, and the acreage that was not planted during 2002; an unusually high percentage of the crop may be used for seed rather than harvested for sugar. Unlike many older varieties, LCP 85-384 has the ability to recover from a late start and still makes adequate yields.

Growers are reminded and urged to report any acres of cane abandoned or un-harvested for the 2002 crop.

Atrazine has been in the process of re-registration for the last year or more. The negotiations between the manufacturer of the herbicide (Syngenta) and the EPA continued until the last possible minute. There were several sticking points, one of which would have directly affected Louisiana cane growers in the Upper Terrebonne – Lafourche Basin. Over the past five-years, there have been several short-term

spikes of Atrazine, which were well above allowable levels for human consumptions in the drinking water at an Iberville water-plant. When the problem was first brought to the attention of officials, several steps were taken by DHH, LDAF, and the LSU AgCenter to address the situation. The steps that were taken included more monitoring of the water and field runoff, educational programs, and the implementation of voluntary BMP's. However, even after these programs were implemented there were still spikes at the water plant.

As the rumors have it, during the negations with EPA, their (the EPA) position was that if there were one more spike (above the hazard to human health levels), they (the EPA), would pull all use of the herbicide in the watershed. As a result of the negoations, the EPA agreed to back off and use a 90-day average as the standard by which to make any decisions.

However, there is still the possibility that use of the herbicide could be lost if the average level of atrazine at the water plant reaches or exceeds the threshold levels during any 90-day period. The problem area is the more northern parishes that are heavily cropped in both cane and corn. Both crops use relatively high rates of atrazine during late February, March, and early April. The major spikes have occurred when rains have followed the application of atrazine, and even more so when the rainfall is right behind the aerial application of the herbicide. Growers in this area are urged to use alternative herbicides if possible, to apply atrazine at lower rates, and to fly fields only when there are no other alternatives. Atrazine is a good, useful and economical tool that is needed by the cane industry. By using a little self-restraint and common sense the use of atrazine in the basin should continue without any problems.

During the 2002 harvest, outfield data was collected on HoCP 96-540 in plant-cane, first-stubble, and second-stubble tests. As shown in Table 1 below, with the harvest of second stubble tests this past fall, the third year of a normal three-year crop cycle was completed for the new variety. Data collected for the crop cycle indicates that HoCP 96-540 yield averaged about 1000 pounds of sugar per acre more than LCP 85-384 for each of the crop cycle years for all soil types.

In the outfield data collected for this harvest (all soils), HoCP 96-540 was significantly higher in sugar per acre in plant-cane and second stubble yields. It was not significantly better in first-stubble, however it was numerically higher. A full report on all varieties harvested in the outfield will be published in a later issue of the Bulletin.

HoCP 96-540 is on the secondary stations at this time and should be released to the industry this fall. Most of the secondary stations indicate that they made good plantings of the new variety. If the variety is released, the League should have an adequate amount of seed cane and should be able to fill most reasonable requests for the new variety this fall. Kleentek reports that they do not have seed of this variety to distribute this year, but should have enough to meet their customers' needs next year.

As has been stated by many, the harvest of 2002 was the worst that most growers and processors have seen. The production data for the 2002 harvest is a good indication of just how poor the quality of the cane reaching the mill was. Processing data for this year's crop is

Table 1.

Outfield Yields in Pounds of Sugar Per Acre

Variety	2000 Plant-cane	2001 First-stubble	2002 Second-stubble	Totals for Crop cycle
LCP 85-384	7,646	7,836	7,439	22,921
HoCP 96-540	9,014	8,476	8,528	26,018

included in Table 2. These numbers may change somewhat as the mills sell their sugar and get actual weights at delivery.

Because good numbers are not yet available for unplanted and un-harvested acreage, there is no good solid number available for tonnage and sugar per acre. However, if total acres (for seed and harvest) and gross cane ground are used to calculate tons of cane per acre, the tonnage for last year's crop (2001) and this year's crop (2002) are nearly the same. On the other hand, when the two years are compared using total acres and tons of sugar produced to calculate sugar per acre, the average sugar per acre for the state is down by about a 1000 pounds per acre. As soon as the data on the number of acres harvested for sugar is obtained, the information will be reported.

Table 2

State Yields 1997 - 2002

Crop Year	Total Harvest and Seed	Gross Cane Ground	Sugar, Raw Value	Mill % Recovery
	Acres	Tons	Short Tons	RV
1997	410,000	12,019,441	1,275,000	10.61%
1998	425,000	13,358,869	1,263,400	9.43%
1999	463,000	15,982,000	1,675,000	10.40%
2000	496,000	15,497,457	1,565,848	10.10%
2001	491,109	14,976,997	1,578,311	10.52%
2002	485,350	14,879,247	1,335,534	8.98%

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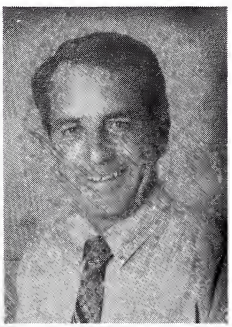

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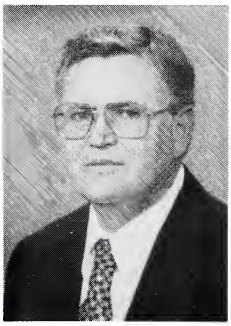

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DuPont™ K-4™ – A New Tool for a Classic Crop

As Louisiana growers celebrate 200 years of sugarcane farming, DuPont™ introduces K-4™ sugarcane herbicide, a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron in a single, water dispersible product. Now registered by the EPA, the new product offers the same broad-spectrum weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides.

In field research over the past two years, K-4™ provided excellent residual control of grass and broadleaf weeds when applied during the fallow period as well as in the cane crop when applied at-planting and in the spring. Dr. Ed Richard, lead research agronomist with the USDA's Agricultural Research Service, and Dr. Jim Griffin, weed scientist with the LSU AgCenter worked with DuPont to evaluate weed control spectrum and the optimum application timing for K-4™.

Richard began testing K-4™ in the fall of 2000. He applied Velpar® L mixed with diuron for the control of seedling johnsongrass, browntop panicum, and the supression of bermudagrass. "We looked at different varieties to see if there were variations in tolerance to the mixture," Richard says. "We saw very good levels of weed control with K-4™ with no crop injury." Griffin has also seen good tolerance of LCP85-384 when multiple applications of K-4™ were made in the plant cane crop.

Growing Cycle and K-4™ Applications

"K-4™ has been especially effective when applied in the spring when sugarcane begins to emerge from the winter dormant period," Griffin explains. "This time of the year is critical from the standpoint of control because weeds emerging early in the season compete with the crop for nutrients and space. Ideally, preventing weeds from ever emerging with the use of an effective soil-applied herbicide would promote maximum early season tillering of the sugarcane and yield at harvest time."

Since LCP85-384 has such good ratooning ability, growers in Louisiana can get anywhere from four to six harvests from a single planting. "Diseases, weeds, and insects can take their toll over the years, and as stands of cane start to thin it's time to consider replanting," Griffin continues. "It is during the fallow period when K-4™ has looked especially impressive."

Using herbicides rather than tillage to keep the seedbeds free of weeds helps to retain moisture, which is beneficial to the planted cane. "K-4™ can also be applied immediately after planting," Griffin says. "This helps to assure that the cane will get off to a good start and that weeds will not reestablish before winter sets in."

K-4™ Advantages

Richard observed good suppression of browntop panicum, seedling johnsongrass, morningglory and bermudagrass. "I see K-4™ as a good broad-spectrum herbicide," he says. "It picks up seedling johnsongrass and most other seedling grasses and suppresses bermudagrass in the field. K-4™ also has good activity on the scarlet or red morningglory species, especially when compared to conventional treatments such as atrazine."

Griffin observes: "Another advantage of K-4™ is that we are using one material, out of one container, to provide complete weed control. Growers will not need to add anything to

it. Also, it's a dry flowable formulation, which means that there should be fewer problems for the mixers and loaders with the rinsing of containers."

Both Griffin and Richard agree the new DuPont™ dispersible granule formulation is easy to measure and place in the tank. "K-4™ is odorless and will not stain equipment," notes Griffin. "These characteristics can be important especially when applications are made near populated areas."

Green Cane Harvesting

Typically, sugarcane shuck matter is burned off after harvest and a blanket of residue is left. But burning often suppresses emergence of next year's cane. "Just how long we will have that practice in Louisiana, Texas and Florida is hard to say," says Richard. "We have subdivisions cropping up into our farming areas. It's very difficult to burn crops and not have the smoke and the ashes fall into an inhabited area. Because of this, a lot of our emphasis has gone towards green cane harvesting."

Richard finds that use of a broad-spectrum herbicide like K-4™ coupled with proper cultivation improves results from green cane harvesting. "You don't bring that weed residue to the factories where sugarcane stalks are crushed to remove the juice," he explains. "So you can have a greater increase in sugar recovery because there is less leaf matter in the mix."

Stepping Up to the Plate

Over the last five years, the Louisiana sugarcane industry has undergone dramatic changes. They include:

- use of LCP85-384 sugarcane variety on 85% of fields.
- the advent of green cane harvesting.
- introduction of reduced tillage practices.

"The green cane harvesting system doesn't require that rows are high," Richard notes. "It's a flat row now, which lends itself to less tillage. The bottom line is: the less you cultivate, the more dollars you keep in your pockets."

Herbicide treatments have to step up to the plate, he adds. "With reduced tillage, we have to go from band applications to broadcast," he says. "We need something like K-4™ that will be effective as a broadcast application on the spectrum of weeds that emerge in our fields."

DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide is a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron that provides the same broad spectrum of weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF in a single, convenient water dispersible product.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Environmentalists At It Again

This column last reported in the May 2002 issue of *The Sugar Bulletin* on the continuing verbal assault by the environmentalist community on the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ). The major accusation is that LDEQ has not enforced environmental laws, especially federally delegated NPDES enforcement authority under the Clean Water Act, to the satisfaction of environmentalists.

Environmentalists demand that these onerous, unnecessarily complex and redundant rules be enforced to the letter, and that draconian fines be extorted for violations including non-polluting paperwork errors which are inevitable under the bewildering NPDES system – a system which after 30 years of implementation has not achieved the clean water goals for which the NPDES program was established. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was requested by environmentalists to investigate alleged LDEQ malfeasance, and to withdraw all delegation of authority promptly. The Dallas Regional Office of EPA apparently had little choice but to say it would investigate.

On February 6, 2003, *The Advocate* of Baton Rouge reported a February 5 news conference where Louisiana Environmental Action Network (LEAN) and Tulane Environmental Law Clinic alleged violations in NPDES reports by seven small private industries and two small municipalities. Letters were sent to all nine entities threatening suit in federal court "if it does not get a response within 60 days." Judging from the bewildering replies of the accused, the accusations are apparently based on biased interpretation of piles of paperwork and have nothing to do with environmental damage. Commenting on the matter, a spokesman for LDEQ said "7,113 facilities in the state have water permits that require discharge monitoring reports to be submitted quarterly." He said further that "staff constraints mean the office places a priority on the 294 "major" facilities that discharge more than a million gallons a day."

One should not be fooled by all this environmental hoopla. Informed environmentalists know that the NPDES system is not workable, and perhaps that is why the program is so dear to them. The Clean Water Act of 1972 establishing NPDES was their baby, and the act's stated purpose was to **eliminate** water pollution in 10 years – not just bring it under control. They convinced Congress this was possible, and gullible Senators voted 98-0 for the bill. President Nixon's sensible veto was overridden by wide margins in both houses of Congress. The NPDES provision in the bill was supposed to be merely an interim measures until all pollution discharges were eliminated. Environmentalists have never given up on this unattainable objective. Now, their obvious strategy is use NPDES as a tool to drive all industrial dischargers out of business, and compel municipalities to stop discharging wastewater, treated or otherwise. How

municipalities are to accomplish this, and at what cost is not their concern – it simply must be done. You never hear environmentalists talk about what cities were like, nor about municipal morbidity rates, in the days prior to water-carriage sewerage systems.

The offensive publicity does not seem to bother LDEQ. Because no level of financing can support full implementation of the NPDES program, they can truthfully use the old bureaucratic excuse that the agency is "underfunded." They did this (again) at the 2002 Legislature, and were successful in getting another 30 percent increase in the already exorbitant fees (taxes) that LDEQ is allowed to collect in order to fund the already bloated bureaucracy. Actually, the agency would be more efficient without all the over-funding and wasteful pursuits, but the environmentalists do not want efficiency – they want it to be prohibitively expensive for industrial and municipal dischargers to operate.

The latest news on the farce being played out is that the Inspector General of EPA says that the Dallas Regional Office of EPA does not exercise adequate federal oversight of Louisiana's environmental programs (*The Advocate* of 2/5/03). Environmentalists say they agree. The *Sunday Advocate* of 2/16/03 reports that a Valentine's Day letter from the EPA Administrator Whitmann to Governor Foster threatens to remove enforcement authority if the state does not agree to major program changes by the end of March 2003. While some improvements are certainly needed at LDEQ, where the changes are most needed is actually at the national program level.

Hopefully, EPA will now do what the environmentalists ask – take back delegation of NPDES authority. That will relieve LDEQ of an impossible task and eliminate the excuse for exorbitant annual tax hikes to fund the bloated bureaucracy. The feds do not have sufficient funds to fully implement NPDES either, and do not have authority to pass on the punishing costs to permittees as does LDEQ. Perhaps environmentalists should be careful what they ask for?

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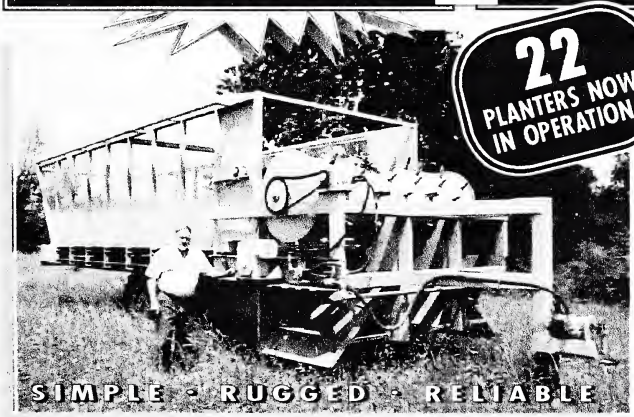

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MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

News From Audubon Sugar Institute

Audubon Sugar Institute short courses The new slate of short courses to be offered this year has been finalized, and can now be seen on our web site at www.lsuagcenter.com/audubon. The registration forms and course details are being mailed out to all the mills in Louisiana and elsewhere. Of particular interest is the fact that Rod Cullen, previously Chief Engineer at SRI and until recently a General Manager at Bundaberg Sugar, Australia, will be running a three-day course on Cane Preparation and Milling. This will be held on the 3rd to 5th June and is sure to be of interest and benefit to Louisiana sugar mills. We will also have the services of Dr Dave Love, a crystallization expert from South Africa, to run the one-day course on Vacuum Pan Instrumentation and Control on 10th April. I hope you take advantage of these opportunities, and that you continue to support the range of courses that we offer. This year we are also offering a new course entitled An Introduction to Sugar Refining.

ASSCT meeting in Baton Rouge

The February meeting in Baton Rouge again provided a good opportunity to get together with our friends in the industry. Audubon Sugar Institute people presented some of the results of their recent research, but some of the data collected is still not ready for presentation. It is too close to the end of the season, and a better analysis of the results will be given to the processors at the annual Audubon Operations Day.

Two things struck me again this year. Firstly why do we not see more of the mill personnel presenting some of the interesting things they have done recently – maybe it is too close to the end of the season? Secondly, having got all the processors together, why don't we have a full day's presentation of papers, even if it does mean holding parallel sessions? We should never under estimate the value of these sessions to everyone involved in the sugar industry. We all learn something every time, and it is a valuable way, particularly for the younger technologists, to keep upgrading the skills and knowledge of the people who have the greatest influence on our costs of production.

ASSCT scholarships

I applaud the Society and the exhibitors at the meeting who together have made it possible to award ASSCT processing scholarships to promising students. John Daigle was the first recipient – he is following the biological engineering degree with the sugar engineering minor option, and is currently employed at Audubon Sugar Institute. He is bright and enthusiastic, and I predict a successful career for him in the Louisiana sugar industry. Now ASSCT has enough money for a second scholarship. We will be advertising for another recipient and we look forward to awarding this to another student at the start of the fall semester. I am sure that these scholarships will be seen in the future as an important way of improving the sugar skills that processors need to stay competitive and profitable in the sugar world.

Sugar engineering courses offered in the LSU College of Engineering

This is the second year that the new courses in Sugar Process Engineering and Sugar Factory Design are being offered. There is a growing interest around the world in what we are doing, and I am optimistic about the future of this sort of education. The present course has students from Colombia, Louisiana, Zimbabwe, Brazil and South Africa. I have learned a lot in setting up and running these courses, and in particular in adjusting to the different approach at LSU compared to what I have been used to in the past. I am sure the courses will continue to improve.

Having these courses available also helps to attract people to do graduate study at Audubon Sugar Institute. I am convinced that one of the best ways we can improve our productivity and our research output is to make more use of good graduate students. They are hard working and intelligent, and help us see new approaches to old problems.

Collaboration with other LSU departments

Those of you who attended the ASSCT meeting recently would have heard a presentation by some final year mechanical engineering students on their capstone design project. This described the design and upgrading of the system for pneumatic separation of trash at Enterprise mill. The students did a good job, and in so doing used some techniques which are new to nearly all of us, but which these students now accept as a routine tool. I refer to computational fluid dynamics, a powerful software package that is able to look at flow patterns, in this case the flow of air in the separation area, to design an improved separation without experimentation. I hope this is the first of many such projects in which we see collaboration between mechanical engineering and the sugar industry. We rely on the processors to suggest projects for these students, and I invite you to make suggestions for me to pass on to them. Even if the projects seem far-fetched, we can still present them to the mechanical engineering department for their consideration. They may have some other new tools in their toolbox that we are not aware of.

We hope during this year to increase our interface with other departments at LSU. We have submitted a joint research proposal with the chemistry department to NSF, as we believe they can help us substantially in investigations into color removal.

Internships and mentoring of young engineers

One of our students from last year served an internship at Iberia during the grinding season. She obtained three credit hours for doing so, and hopefully also proved to be valuable at the mill. This is a good way of engendering interest in students in the sugar industry. It enables the milling company to assess the student concerned and hopefully inspires the student to seek a career in sugar in the future. This could be sealed by the mill providing a scholarship for the student. Most of the scholarships on offer to undergraduates are in the range of $1000 to $2000 per year, and this would be sufficient to secure the student's further study in sugar processing.

If and when a new graduate joins a sugar company, a good way to guide the student and ensure quick and efficient learning is to provide a mentor for the new engineer. We at Audubon would be happy to assist in the process, and could assist in drawing up a training program. Mentoring is a much under-utilized activity, but is a valuable way of getting a new engineer up to speed quickly. The time and energy devoted to the engineer in this process is tremendously motivating. All the outcomes from the mentoring process are good.

Training in Guatemala

I have just returned from an ISSCT Executive meeting in Guatemala. They have set up a masters program in sugar technology and engineering, in conjunction with Del Valle University. It runs during the 6-month periods when the mills are not operational, and they have been producing about four graduates per year from this program since it was started in 1996. I am sure this is going to accelerate progress in their industry – they have halved their cost of production in the last six years, and with this

influx of properly trained people, I predict a good future for their industry. While countries like Guatemala and the Philippines are aggressively implementing training and educational programs, we in the Louisiana industry need to assess whether we are doing enough in this area.

Use of sugar cane biomass as a building block for chemicals and energy

There is a great deal of interest and activity in the US and elsewhere at present in the use of bagasse as a feedstock. We have had a number of approaches on current initiatives including the manufacture of biodegradable plastics, enzymatic conversion of bagasse to sugars for the production of ethanol, and the use of bagasse as a feedstock for a host of different chemicals, some high value and low volume. All of these have the potential to add a great deal more value to the products of the sugar industry. They may also affect the way we breed cane, for biomass not only for sugar. But all of it will be aimed at securing a profitable future for the cane industry in Louisiana. All of them too come with the promise of substantial additional funding, so that the primary emphasis of looking after the present needs of the Louisiana industry will not be diluted.

SPRI Research program

The League is a member of Mary An Godshall's organization based in New Orleans. Every year they put together a research program on the advice and agreement of their sponsors. If you have any ideas on what they should be involved in, please communicate them to me before the end of March.

Progress with NIR analysis of cane

The Foss Infracana system we had tested at Cinclaire for a season is now in full time operation in a sugar mill in the Philippines. I spoke to those involved with its evaluation, and was told that they are very happy with the results they have been getting. They have already processed 30, 000 samples through it, and apart from the routine replacement of blades on the Jeffco cutter-grinder, they have had no trouble. Foss North America may have a unit for us to put on trial again in the next grinding season. I welcome this opportunity, because experience in other agricultural industries suggests this is probably the best way to analyze agricultural crops.

This time, apart from proving its reliability, it would be desirable to try to develop correlations for dextran above a threshold level, for reducing sugars, for true sucrose by HPLC and for other components like ash and phosphates. If this comes about I will be again looking for one of the mills to participate in a full-scale trial, this time with no commitment to purchase.

Willem Kampen

Dr Willem Kampen leaves Audubon Sugar Institute at the end of February. It seems that his dreams of getting involved in the rum industry are coming to fruition. He has been at Audubon for many years and has always been an energetic researcher for the sugar industry. We wish him well and much success in his new endeavors.

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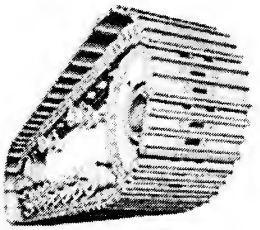

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DuPont™ K-4™ Takes the "Yellow" out of Sugarcane Farming

Recently registered by the EPA, DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide is an effective alternative to the standard herbicides. A new formulation of hexazinone and diuron, DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide provides the same broad spectrum of weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF in a single, water dispersible product. It doesn't stain or bleach, and the new product controls or suppresses the main weed culprits in the sugarcane industry: bermudagrass, morningglory, itchgrass and seedling johnsongrass. "I prefer K-4™* over Prowl® and Command®," says Louisiana sugarcane farmer Mike Melancon. "It has very little smell, it's easy to mix, and it's easy to clean up. There's a big, big difference."

Since some of Melancon's fields lie adjacent to a subdivision, he is particularly sensitive to spraying herbicides that stain or smell. "Most farming in South Louisiana is intermingled with neighborhoods," he explains. "We don't have huge blocks of land, like they do in Florida. We have some isolated areas with 300- or 400-acre blocks, but most everything is 40 acres here, 100 acres there. K-4™ will fit well in these areas."

K-4™ is available in 20-pound bags in a highly soluble XP formulation that will treat five acres at four pounds per acre.

Moisture Activates Material

A water-dispersible granule, K-4™ is absorbed through the roots and foliage of weeds. Moisture is required to activate the material in the soil. Best results are obtained when the applications are made to a firm, well-prepared seedbed that is moist at the time of application and when 0.5 to 1.0 inches of rainfall is received within two weeks of application.

Before K-4™, Melancon used a combination of Prowl®, diuron, Gramoxone® and 2,4-D in the springtime to control itchgrass, seedling johnsongrass and morninglories. "I've taken to trying a little K-4™ year-round, and backing off other chemicals," Melancon explains. "Basically, K-4™ does what the others do, plus suppression of bermudagrass."

Bermudagrass has been a continual problem for sugarcane growers, demanding a wide variety of chemical inputs through the years. "Virtually nothing I put out in the spring is geared towards bermudagrass control," says Melancon. "Bermudagrass management begins in the fallow season and at planting. In the fallow, K-4™ is a good fit. We've found that by applying K-4™ after we have worked our fields and reestablished our rows, we could basically keep our fields weed-free. The key to a successful weed control program is to do a good job with the fallow fields. This is your foundation. We continue this program with an application of K-4™ immediately after planting."

Application Versatility

K-4™ also has great application versatility. It can be used for preemergence control of annual grasses and broadleaf weeds in newly planted sugarcane, stubble sugarcane and fallow land intended for future sugarcane planting. All applications should be made at the labeled rate of 3.75 to 4.0 lb. per acre.

- **Newly Planted Sugarcane**: Applications should be made immediately following planting and row packing and prior to crop emergence.

- **Stubble (Ratoon) Sugarcane**: For best results, applications should be made immediately following harvest and prior to subsequent weed germination. K-4™ may also be applied postemergence to stubble sugarcane until the crop reaches a height of 18 inches. After the sugarcane exceeds a height of 18 inches, K-4™ may be applied as a post-directed spray up to 140** days before harvest. If weeds are present at application, a tank mix partner is recommended for improved postemergence control. In addition, a non-ionic surfactant or crop oil concentrate is recommended when weeds are present at application.
- **Fallow (To be Planted to Sugarcane)**: Applications should be made to newly prepared seedbeds that are free of clods and existing vegetation. Make fallow applications of K-4™ at least 60 days prior to sugarcane planting.

K-4™ is Safe for Sugarcane

As part of a DuPont research project, Melancon applied K-4™ as a test plot on a portion of his 2100-acre farm to evaluate sugarcane response to both spring and layby applications of the herbicide. Melancon observed that when used at planting, K-4™ is safe for the crop and provides excellent, broad-spectrum weed control.

"That's a big plus," Melancon notes. "K-4™ also allows us to get into stubble fields in February and early March as weather permits. We don't have to wait until late March and April to apply herbicide the instant before our grass is going to emerge and risk having wet conditions. This is a big advantage with this product."

And the packaging of K-4™ is much easier to handle. "The dry formulation will allow us to get away from the hassle of handling and transporting large volumes of liquid products," said Melancon. "This means that I will be able to do away with a trailer that I use to haul these products in bulk tanks."

#####

* Reference to K-4™ by Mike Melancon includes tank-mix combinations of hexazinone and diuron at the ratio found in DuPont™ K-4™.

**Louisiana Only. "Special Local Need" (24C) label is required for applications up to 140 days prior to sugarcane harvest.

Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix applications.

DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide is a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron that provides the same broad spectrum of weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF in a single, convenient water dispersible product.

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Evaluation of Potassium-based Ripeners as an Alternative to Polado® Tropical Storm Isidore and Hurricane Lilli's effects on Polado-Treated Cane The Effect of 2,4-D on Polado Activity

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Introduction

By now most of us have had enough experience with Polado (glyphosate) to realize the benefits as well as the shortcomings of this herbicidal ripener. With proper application conditions and timing, Polado has consistently increased sugar yield as much as 1000 lbs per acre. Some reduction in tonnage output should be expected (up to 10%), but an increase in TRS of 25 to 60 lbs sugar/ton increases sugar/acre yield, a grower's bottom line. As was stated in the early years of Polado use in Louisiana, it is not the perfect ripener. Although the harvest window was originally thought to be much smaller, the now commonly accepted window of 35 to 49 days after treatment is still restrictive to a grower's harvest schedule, especially during the terrible harvest conditions experienced this past season. In addition, Polado is nothing more than Roundup, a systemic herbicide. A systemic herbicide is one that moves throughout the plant, and into the rootstock. This effect results in delayed emergence of Polado-treated cane the following spring. Though no one has been able to show that this delayed emergence is yield limiting to subsequent crops, growers understandably do not care to see this effect in their fields. Many growers reported poor performance of Polado this season. Upon inspection, three scenarios were often evident due to the inclement weather:

1) High refractometer readings, high brix and POL on mill test sheets, but low CRS: due to high mud and/or fiber due to excessively lodged cane. Polado worked, but its benefits were masked by other components of the payment formula.
2) Low refractometer readings, low brix and Pol on mill test sheets: usually because too few days of Polado application prior to harvest. Much of the benefit does not occur until 38 to 42 days after application.
3) High refractometer readings, low brix and POL on mill test sheets, low CRS: not a common occurrence, but these fields had excessive bull shoots from early, severe lodging resulting in high tonnage, but low CRS since the bull shoots bring down total POL in a tested load. These fields are often misleading since generally, we only take brix readings from mature, millable stalks, not bull shoots.

Do we abandon Polado because of these shortcomings? Certainly not. But we can look for alternatives for the future so we can avoid these problems. Other researchers are investigating alternative herbicides such as Fusilade® and Arsenal® to replace Polado. The initial research with these products looks very promising, but registration with the EPA of a new herbicidal ripener will take five years or more and cost as much as 100 million dollars. We are also concerned that the manufacturers of these herbicides have expressed little interest in investing that kind of money in a crop such as sugarcane grown on such few acres in the U.S.

Of some interest was research recently published in the Sugar Journal pertaining to non-herbicidal ripeners (M. Haro, H. Mafla, A. Fors, & C. Marquez. The Use of Non-Herbicidal Ripeners in Areas Adjacent to Other Crops. The Sugar Journal, October 2001). Although much of the conclusions were based on non-significant data, the author reported an increase in TRS equivalent to Polado from the use of late-season, foliarly-applied potassium nitrate (K_2O 46%; 13.75% N) with no reduction in cane growth. Naturally, this sounds too good to be true since the cessation of growth is the thought to be necessary to ripen cane. Older generation sugarcane growers often claim that potash "sweetens" the cane. Indeed, the Potash and Phosphate Institute indicates that "potassium deficiency results in reduced photosynthesis [the synthesis of sugar] and increased respiration [the breakdown of sugar] thus lowering the plants carbohydrate [sugar] supply". Several growers in the belt currently fertilize each spring with as much as 200 units of potassium and to date we have not seen any benefit in sugar per ton at the end of the season. However, when soil samples are taken in January from these same fields, the potassium levels are very low. This would indicate that when potassium is applied in early spring, the cane crop utilizes it quickly and what little it does not use is leached into the ground. But if potassium is needed to ripen cane, there may be no potassium available when the cane needs it most, during the harvest season. Therefore, it seems reasonable that late season foliar applications of potassium nitrate could induce cane ripening similar to Polado.

If potassium-based foliar fertilizers are indeed effective cane ripeners, the impact would be tremendous:

- No long registration period and no expense would be required by companies to register the material with the EPA. It is a fertilizer and is essentially unregulated.
- No reduction in cane emergence could be expected to occur the following spring.
- The material is relatively inexpensive.
- The harvest window would be much longer than that of Polado.

However, even if proven effective, potassium-based ripeners may not be beneficial to this industry as a whole. Previous research has indicated that excessive potash fertilization leads to problems with pan boilers in the factory (P. Honig. Principles of Sugar Technology. Volume II: 209).

Indeed, the data from the Ecuador seem too good to be true, as well it may be, but studies needed to be conducted to evaluate the non-herbicidal ripener under Louisiana conditions and varieties. The first year of these studies are described in this article.

In addition, growers very often inquire about mixing in 2,4-D with Polado to control late-season escapes of tie-vines (morningglories). Consultants and researchers have been hesitant to recommend this because much data has indicated that 2,4-D can antagonize Roundup on certain weed species, and Polado is nothing more than Roundup. Because no data has yet been made available on sugarcane, a treatment was included in the study to determine if 2,4-D affects the performance of Polado.

Many may also recall how Polado-treated cane appeared to be much more damaged after tropical storm Isidore and hurricane Lilli than nontreated cane. Since the treatments were applied about 30 days prior to the storms, the data collected at harvest gave us insight into the effects of severe weather and lodging on Polado-treated cane.

Material and Methods

A large plot experiment was conducted on second stubble LCP 85-384 at Rebel V Farms (George and Jack Viator, New Iberia, LA). The treatments were applied on August 27 using a Robinson R44 helicopter calibrated to deliver 5 gallons per acre and operated by Sam and Jerry Satterfield of Acadiana Helicopters. Each plot consisted of two 6-row swaths, was 2.1 acres in size, and was replicated four times. An aerial photo taken at harvest is shown in Figure 1. The treatments applied are as follows:

(1) Polado (6oz/A)
(2) Polado (6oz/A) + 2,4-D (1 quart/A)
(3) potassium nitrate (6.6 lbs/A)
(4) Kay-phol/potassium carbonate (2 quarts/A)
(5) nontreated check

Beginning at 14 days after treatment (DAT), brix measurements from twenty stalks in each plot were taken weekly until harvest using either a handheld refractometer or from the USDA laboratory. Hand samples were collected for sucrose analysis at 21 and 49 DAT and processed at the USDA lab in Houma. Leaf tissue analysis was conducted on leaves from each plot at 21 DAT and at harvest. Harvesting of plots began October 14 (49 DAT). One replication was harvested per day for four days using a 1999 Cameco Combine Harvester. Up to 30 tons were loaded in each truck and two trucks were harvested per plot. The corresponding row feet required to complete each load was measured so that tons of cane per acre could be calculated. All loads were weighed and core sampled at M.A. Patout and Sons Enterprise Factory.

Treatments of Polado, Polado + 2,4-D, Kayphol, and potassium nitrate were included in small plot experiments conducted at the USDA research station in Houma. Treatments were replicated 4 times in a randomized complete block design. The rates of these treatments were consistent with the large plot experiment. Treatments were applied on August 27, 2002 using a backpack sprayer calibrated to deliver 10.5 gallons per acre. Hand-cut stalk samples cut from each plot were processed for sucrose analysis at 28, 35, and 42 DAT.

Results and Discussion

The Effects of Tropical Storm Isidore and Hurricane Lilli on Polado-treated Cane

Following Isidore, all the plots in the large plot experiment were severely lodged. Soon after the storms, however, the Polado-treated cane remained lodged, flat on the ground, and did not appear to right itself to any great extent. The plots with no Polado began to erect quickly after the storm, giving the stalk a bowed appearance. More severe shredding of tops and leaves were noticed in the Polado and Polado + 2,4-D-treated cane compared to the nontreated cane.

The results from the weekly brix measurements are presented in Table 2. A steady increase in brix was seen throughout the ripening period until tropical storm Isidore, in which a sharp decrease in the dissolved solids content of the stalk occurred. This was likely a function of the cane attempting to right itself and put out new growth in the form of secondary shoots, utilizing stored sugar in the process. It is important to note that no decrease in brix occurred after the initial lodging, even during hurricane Lilli. Brix readings were significantly higher in the Polado treatments than the nontreated from 14 DAT until harvest. At harvest (49 DAT), cane yield in (tons/acre) was reduced 3% by the Polado treatment (Figure 3). Core sample data from the mill indicated a 34 lb/ton increase in TRS in the Polado treatments over the nontreated (Figure 4). The Polado treatment resulted in a 912 lb sugar/acre increase over the nontreated cane (Figure 5), despite the heavy damage suffered

from the storms. This data is consistent with past research on Polado and its benefits in sugar production.

Results from the tissue analysis of leaves in the canopy showed a significant increase in concentrations of magnesium and calcium levels at 21 DAT for Polado-treated cane versus the nontreated check (data not shown). This may prove useful commercially in determining exposure to Polado drift to non-target cane.

Evaluation of Potassium-based Ripeners as an Alternative to Polado

In the large plot experiment, percent brix in the Polado-treated cane was consistently higher than potassium nitrate, Kay-phol, and the nontreated cane throughout the monitoring period (Figure 2). The potassium nitrate and Kay-phol treatments were not statistically higher than the nontreated in most weeks, with the exception of the final measurements (48 DAT) in which juice brix of the potassium nitrate treatment was greater than the nontreated, but less than the Polado treatment. Analysis of the hand cleaned, twenty-stalk samples showed significantly higher TRS for potassium nitrate over the check at harvest (Figure 6); however, this was not detected in the commercial core samples. Potassium nitrate and Kay-phol did not increase core sample TRS or sugar yield compared to the nontreated cane (Figure 4 and 5). The slight increase in TRS at 49 DAT evident in the hand samples may just be a coincidence, but it could indicate that the potassium nitrate was just beginning to induce ripening, but not enough to be detected commercially. If a longer exposure time before harvest is required to achieve accelerated ripening, applying this product earlier in the season (i.e. tank mixed borer insecticide applications) may be feasible since growth is not inhibited. Increased potassium levels were not detected in leaf tissue 21 DAT after treatment with potassium products. This may be a result of potassium being accumulated in the stalk or rapidly incorporated into other non-detectable compounds.

The small plot experiment conducted at the USDA research farm did not show a significant increase in TRS at 28, 35, and 42 DAT for either potassium nitrate or Kay-phol (data not shown). Since data was not taken after 42 DAT, it is not known if TRS increased for the potassium nitrate treatment at 49 DAT as in the large plot experiment.

Effects of 2,4-D on Polado Activity

As evident in the brix measurements, stalk samples, and commercial core lab data, 2,4-D at a rate of 1 quart/A did not adversely affect the activity of Polado throughout the ripening period (Figures 3,4,5, and 6). These results were also observed in the small plot experiment (data not shown).

Summary

There are several conclusions that can be made from these experiments. However, it must be emphasized that this study is not complete until the treatments can be repeated at other locations over different years.

- Cane treated with Polado prior to the storms of 2002 appeared to be more damaged by high winds, however the Polado treatment increased yields 912 lbs/acre over the nontreated check. If a grower expects to get 10 cents/pound in his pocket after landlord and mill shares, this would translate to a gain of $91/acre, or $91,000 increase income on 1000 acres of treated stubble.
- Potassium nitrate and Kay-phol did not increase TRS or sugar yield at 49 days after treatment. The potassium nitrate treatment did, however, slightly increase TRS in hand samples processed at harvest time. This may indicate that potassium-based ripeners may require longer exposure to the chemical before harvest. Due to the possibility of excessive potassium causing problems in the factories, and the lack of evidence that these products are effective

as ripeners, it is suggested that these product not be used commercially in Louisiana until more data can be generated.

- The addition of 1 quart/acre of 2,4-D did not reduce the activity of Polado in this study.
- Exposure of LCP 85-384 to Polado resulted in a significant increase in magnesium and calcium concentrations in leaf tissue at 21 days after treatment. This may prove useful in determining off-target exposure to Polado in the future.

Special thanks go out to the following:

- The American Sugar Cane League for support of this project
- Tim Forshee of Vicksburg Chemical for the donation of potassium nitrate
- Billy Posey of Phosyn for the donation of Kay-phol
- David Deygeter of 3-D Chemical for the donation of 2,4-D
- Sam and Jerry Satterfield of Acadiana Helicopters for their extra time and photos

Figure 1. Aerial photograph of test site taken at harvest

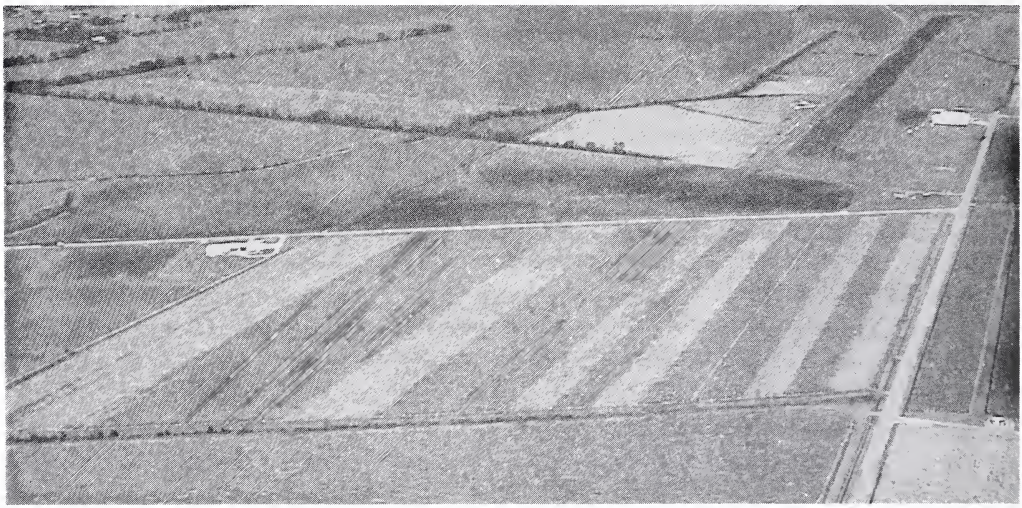
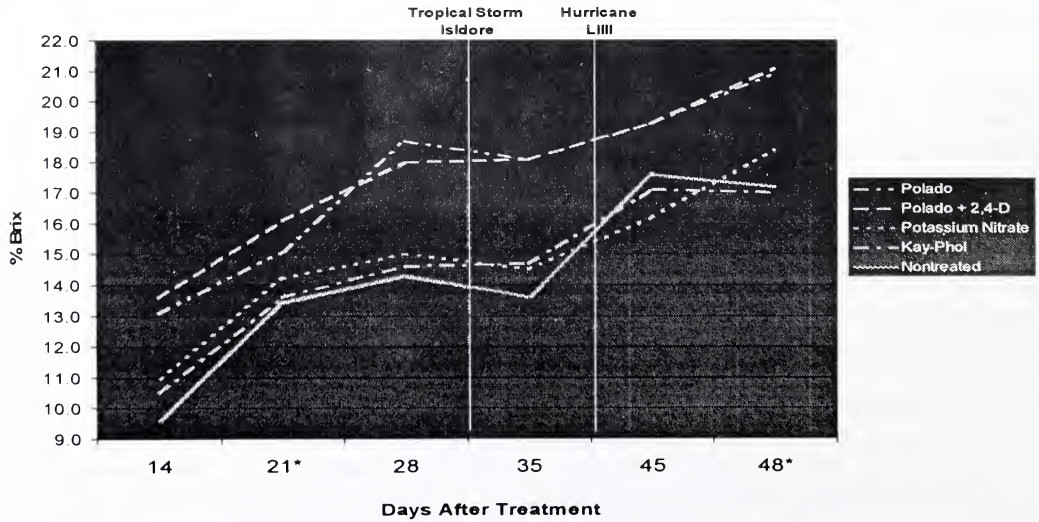
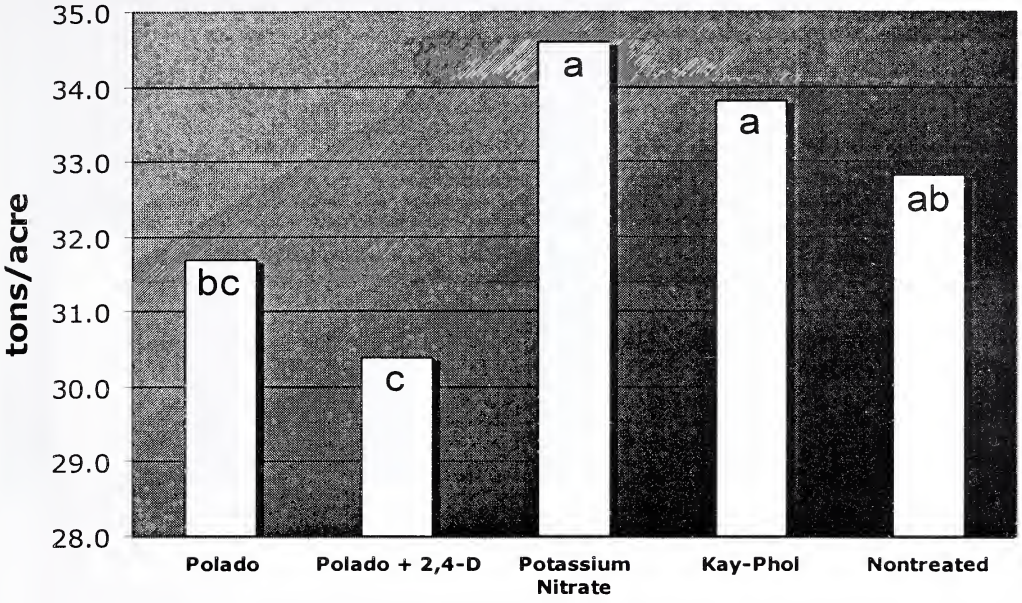


Figure 2. Percent Brix Measurements



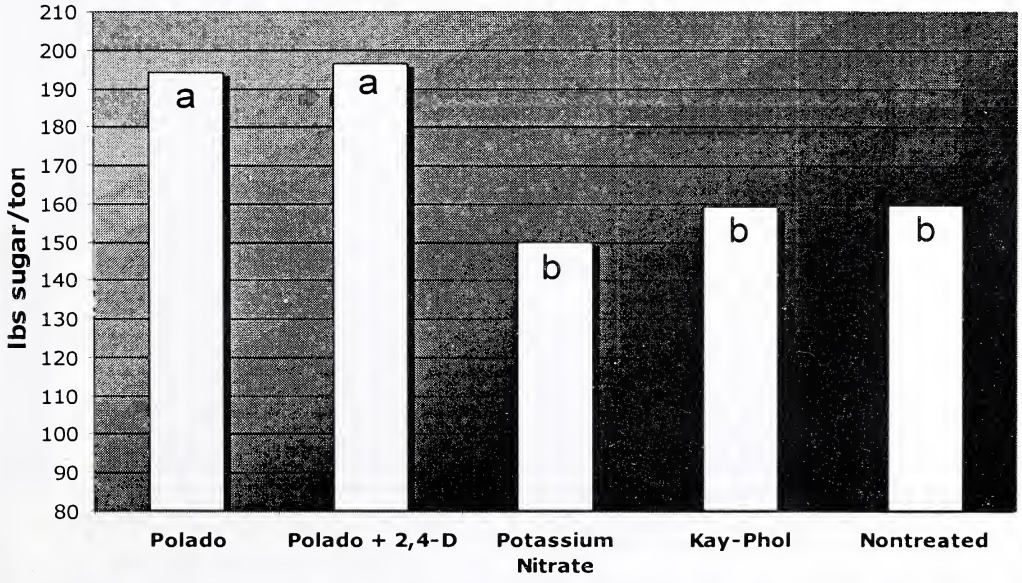
* Indicates juice brix measurements obtained from stalk samples processed in USDA lab

Figure 3. Cane Yield



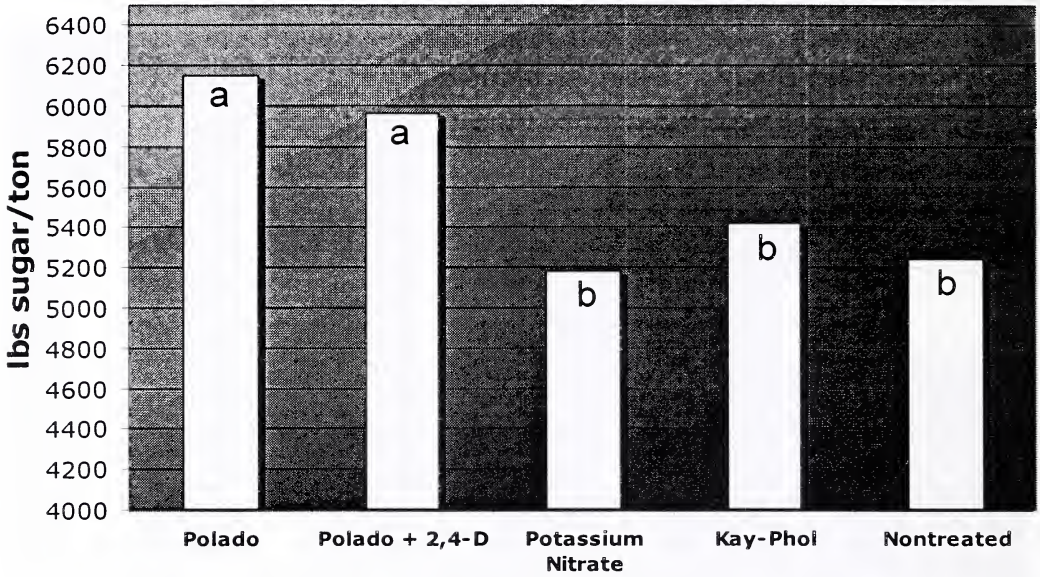
Means followed by the same letter do not significantly differ (Duncan's New MRT, P=0.05)

Figure 4. TRS (Commercial Core Lab)



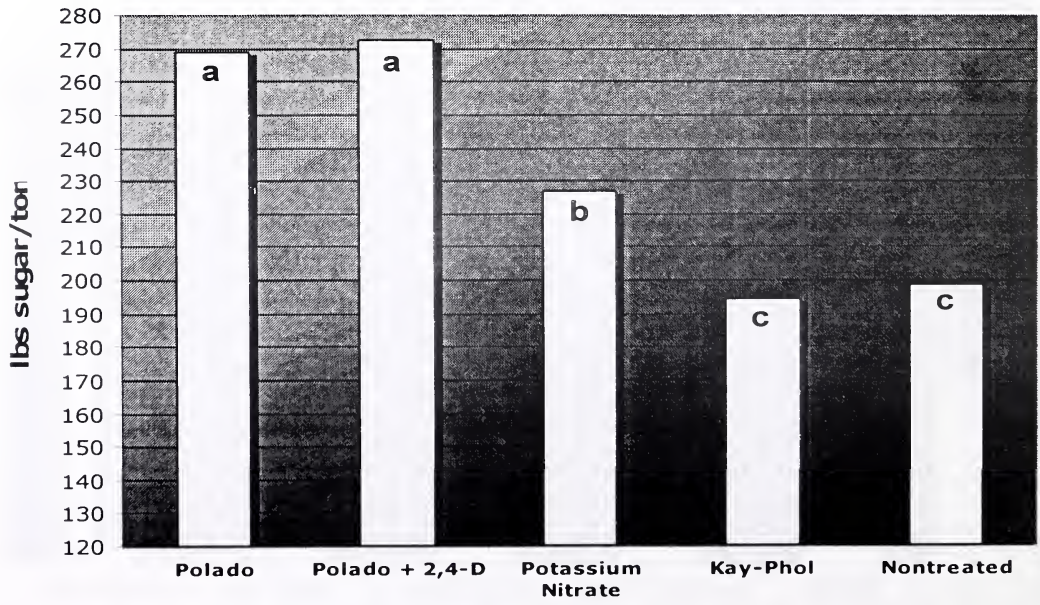
Means followed by the same letter do not significantly differ (Duncan's New MRT, P=0.05)

Figure 5. Sugar Yield



Means followed by the same letter do not significantly differ (Duncan's New MRT, P=0.05)

Figure 6. TRS (Hand Samples)



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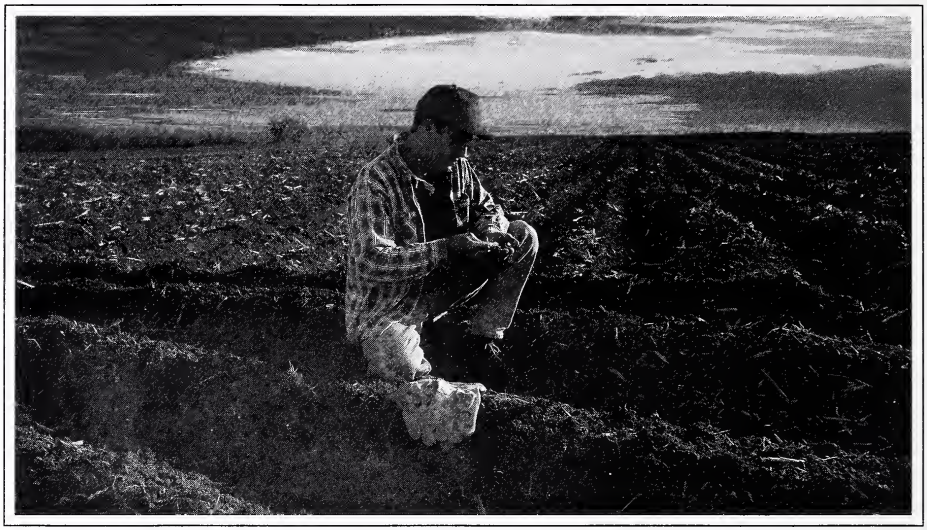

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

SB 215 S89

Disaster
Unhealthy HFCS - GMO Products
Ten Years

I had always heard the older people saying how the days, months and years seem to pass more quickly as one gets older. For some reason, probably because there seems to always be something that consumes my days and nights, I find that statement to be a true one. I guess that my only real concern now is that I have to now admit that maybe I am getting to be one of the "old" people. That is hard to understand, in relative terms, in that as I am now at the ripe old age of 55 years I find myself suggesting that 75 is a young age when I hear that someone has died at that age or younger.

You're probably asking yourself at this time, what is Charlie's point. I guess my point is that having constant issues, meetings, and emergencies as a part of my everyday life and schedule has managed to keep me still feeling as though I am young. We are now in April, and it seems as though Hurricane Lili and Tropical Storm Isidore are old history. Yet I am daily involved with the ongoing issue of getting the disaster funds delivered to the affected people in this industry. That is not to say that there were some in this industry not affected, but in terms of the definition of disaster, the true fact is that there will be some that were not affected "disastrously".

A small working group of League leadership, including both growers and processors, along with USDA-FSA, and LSU Ag Economics has been heavily involved in trying to wade through the many delivery issues that are involved with disaster assistance. The data that will be used for determining just who might receive any assistance needs to be verifiable, as well as certifiable. The fact that I do know before we complete this delivery of funds is that there will be federal auditors following up on who got what, did they qualify, and was the entire process done correctly? But even more important to them is that the process is done in the proper legal manner and in accordance with the wishes of the Congress who provided these taxpayer dollars to our Louisiana sugar industry. This is not a task taken lightly as I have always told my friends that I have a great disdain for those orange jumpsuits issued to tenants in the "big house." In short, life is to short, as witnessed by the fact that 75 years of age is now a point in time that I hope to achieve. And, more importantly, it now appears it could be just another birthday rather than some benchmark point in my life.

Back to the disaster. I have also been advising your League leadership that there is always someone who will second guess any delivery system, as has happened with farm bill language and other issues. Your leadership, for the entire time that I have been with the League, has endeavored to do what is right and in the best

interests of the industry as a whole. There is the notion of trying to appease everyone at all times held by some, but that is not and has never been a truly reasonable option on any issue. The main benefit of belonging to the League is that it has been an effective and active organization that has benefited its members. The simple measure is that you have gotten your money's worth from your dues and PAC contributions. Yet, there are still some who do not pay their dues but receive the same benefits as those of you who do participate. It seems those people are usually the first to want to criticize "how" the League does things. For the life of me, I will probably go to my early grave trying to figure those individuals out. And if 75 is my magic number, then I only have 20 more years left to contemplate this phenomenon.

Unhealthy HFCS – GMO products

There have been some articles published recently that have indicated that HFCS might be a "fat inducer" in products that use HFCS as its sweetener agent. No one wishes bad luck on anyone or on any group and its product, but the only thing that I guess I can and should say at this time is that sugar has always been the "ALL NATURAL – 15 CALORIES PER SPOONFUL." And that, my friends, has always been and always will be the fact.

Additionally, Don Wallace recently showed me a cold drink can that had the most unusual label that I have seen on any product. This is not a quote but a general summation. This cold drink company has begun using pure cane sugar as its sweetener because of their concern for the fact that HFCS may be genetically modified, which is not in keeping with their "natural" and healthy product. First time in my life that I think I've seen such terminology on a cold drink can. Got to love it!

Daddy always said that if you give "it" long enough, things would turn in your favor. Maybe things are beginning to come around on some of these things that have had adverse affects on our industry in the past.

E-mail Group

I have, for at least the past year or so, continued to mail information to a group I refer to as the E-mail group. I have sent such things as progress on matters of concern to our industry, events of note, accomplishments of your League, good news and the inevitable bad news.

That list has steadily grown over the past year or so, and I think that there are more members who now have computers in their households, but Nannette doesn't have you on the list. If you would wish to have your address added to this group, please send Nannette an e-mail at nnickens@amscl.org and ask that she add you. For those of you who are not members, please know that Nannette will check the dues roster before adding people on to the list. But you can get on the list if you pay your dues, so I would ask you to join up if you are not a member. There aren't that many of you out there that aren't members of the League, but it would be nice one day, before I depart this good earth, to be able to say that the League represents every cane grower in the state. 100% representation!

Ten years

I have been at the League for a few months past ten years as I write this article. The tenure has been filled with as many ups and downs as any roller coaster ride I could ever wish to ride. But by my nature, the tougher the problem, the more complex the problem, the more challenged I become. The first ten have been challenging but fun if I might be allowed to use that word. I feel that your League is responsive and attentive to all issues that affect each and every one of you. All matters may not be handled exactly as all the varied mind sets would have them settled or addressed, but then, that is only human nature to second guess what others do. It is not a new phenomenon. In the meantime, again, know that your Leadership has always had the industry's best interests in its decision making process. We have stayed united as required for a "strong" organization to be successful. As long as I am your General Manager, rest assured that your health and welfare will always be at the forefront of any decision-making that affects this industry.

Good luck on this upcoming crop. I don't seem to have much sway with Mother Nature, so I can only hope and pray that the rain will go away, at least long enough for you to get back into your fields to work.

WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Budget Plans Threaten Ag Spending
House Agriculture Subcommittee Members Named
USDA Revises Allotments and Allocations
USDA WASDE March Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The House and Senate Budget Committees approved separate FY04 budget resolutions in mid-March that could force cuts in agriculture spending well below those contemplated in the 2002 farm bill. The Senate package, the specific components of which are non-binding on the authorizing committees, includes a Grassley amendment to shift $1.4 billion from production agriculture to conservation program spending.

While the Grassley budget amendment called only for a shift in funding from one account to another, it appears that Grassley will offer an amendment on the Senate floor or in the agriculture committee that would place a "hard" payment limit on producers that would eliminate the three-entity rule and generic certificates, with the $1.4 billion in savings being redirected to the Conservation Security Program (CSP). Recall that the CSP was slashed in the recently concluded omnibus budget agreement for 2003. The payment limits issue is of paramount importance to the general "program" commodities, such as cotton and rice, and a major battle over the payment limitations seems certain.

While the operation of the sugar program should not be affected by this attack on farm programs, since sugar producers receive no direct payments from the government, we can expect the usual attacks on our program when appropriators begin to markup appropriations bills to accommodate the budget resolution's spending parameters.

In the House, the Budget Committee included mandatory agricultural spending accounts in the budget reconciliation instructions. While House Agriculture Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) voiced support for the budget resolution and committed his committee to comply with the resolution, Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD) warned that the House package would strip up to 25% of the new agricultural spending approved in the 2002 farm bill. Other House GOP leaders indicated that changes would be required before the budget resolution will be approved by the House.

House Agriculture Subcommittee Members named

The House Agriculture Subcommittee on Specialty Crops and Foreign Agriculture Programs will be chaired by Rep. William L. Jenkins (R-TN). Other Republican Members include Representatives Larry Combest (TX – retiring in May), Terry Everett (AL), Gil Gutknecht (MN), Robin Hayes (NC), Dennis Rehberg (MT), Mike Rogers (AL), and Devin Nunes (CA). Democratic Members include Representatives Mike McIntyre (NC), Bob Etheridge (NC), Baron Hill (IN), David Scott

(GA), Jim Marshall (GA), Bennie G. Thompson (MS) and Rodney Alexander (LA).

USDA Revises Allotments and Allocations

USDA announced revisions to the cane sugar marketing allotments and allocations, reducing allotments for Hawaii and Puerto Rico by a total of 28,897 short tons (raw value – STRV). USDA increased Louisiana's allotment by 9,280 STRV, Texas by 3,753 STRV and Florida by 15,864 STRV. As a result, Louisiana's allotment is now 1,340,380 STRV.

USDA WASDE March Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its March World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 fell slightly to 8,185,000 short tons, from 8,260,000 short tons (raw value), due to an 85,000 decrease in beet sugar extraction estimates. Beet production for 2002/03 was reduced to 4,215,000 from 4,300,000 tons in February, while increases in Texas and Hawaii led to a 10,000 ton increase in the cane production estimate to 3,970,000 tons. The 2001/02 overall production and cane production estimates remained unchanged at 7,906,000 tons and 3,992,000 tons, respectively. 2001/02 and 2002/03 non-program imports were also unchanged at 81,000 and 60,000 tons, respectively, as were 2002/03 imports under re-export at 300,000 tons. This left the 2002/03 total imports estimate unchanged at 1,605,000 tons. Louisiana cane sugar production for 2001/02 and 2002/03 remain at 1,587,000 and 1,360,000 short tons, respectively. The amount of 2001/02 sugar held by CCC was unchanged at 212,000 tons. Ending stocks were reduced to 1,337,000 from 1,416,000 in February, resulting in a reduction of the 2002/03 stocks-to-use ratio to 13.7 percent from 14.6 percent last month. For 2001/02, the stocks-to-use estimate was unchanged at 12.3 percent.

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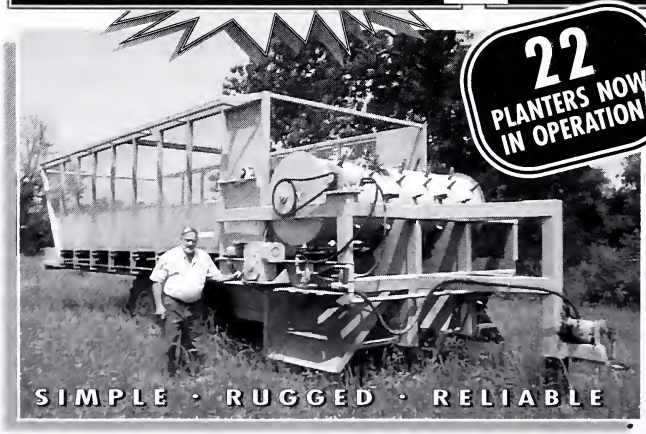

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

Legendre Receives Outstanding Service Member Award

Mr. Irving E. Legendre, Jr. received the 2003 Outstanding Service Member Award from Chairman of the Board Jackie Theriot at the Annual Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League. Seated (l. to r.) are daughters Katie Hebert and Adeline Bernard, Mr. Legendre and wife Byrne, and daughter Mary Byrne Bordelon. Standing (l. to r.) are John and Irene (sister) Legendre, Ben (brother) and Nell Legendre, and Eloise (sister) and Thad Toups.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN THEIR JUNIOR OR SENIOR YEARS IN SUGAR PROCESS ENGINEERING

The AMERICAN SOCIETY OF SUGAR CANE TECHNOOGISTS wishes to award a second undergraduate sugar processing scholarship for a student enrolled in the College of Engineering, to study sugar processing, starting in the fall semester 2003. The recipient must be majoring in biological, chemical, mechanical or electrical engineering, and must have a grade point average of 2.75 or higher. The scholorship is for $1,000 per year, and is renewable depending on performance. Preference will be given to a resident of one of the sugar producing areas of Louisiana.

For more details and application forms, contact Dr. Peter Rein at Audubon Sugar Institute, telephone 225-578-3387, or prein@agctr.lsu.edu

ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report
Processing Environmental Report For 2002
Agricultural Environmental Report
Central Research Report

At the writing of this article on March 14, 2003, little or no good fieldwork has been completed. Other than the last week in January and the first week in February, the fields and headlands have been too wet for equipment to travel on without making even deeper ruts. Therefore, few fields have even had herbicide applications. Growers are starting to get anxious, but most are stating that they will wait until field conditions are more suitable for working.

Many Fields of both plant cane and stubble are heavily infested with winter weeds. These winter weeds should be no problem to control and remove once field work can commence. Growers are finding more Bermuda grass in their plant cane than they are accustomed to seeing, even after their normally effective fallow plow and herbicide program. With all of the rain after planting, this is to be expected. Because of possible injury and reduction in yields, no herbicide that will cause any additional stress should be applied to the cane. Growers are reminded that they can contact their local county agent and/or crop consultant if they need recommendations with their herbicide programs.

With a couple of weeks of warm weather, many fields are starting to green up. Most stubble fields harvested after mid harvest are showing very good, while many fields harvested early during harvest are not marking well. Upon close observation in many fields treated with Polado that could not be harvested until well past the due date, a fairly regular stand of small shoots can be seen. Fields of stubble, which have had the residue removed, are marking much better at this time than those fields that have not had the residue removed from the top of the row.

Even though much effort has been put into draining fields, because of the number of ruts and the depth of the ruts, many stubble fields still have standing water in them. This is to be expected when a week does not pass without getting a half inch or more of rain, which is followed by a day or two of cloudy weather with heavy morning fog.

In discussions with growers, many are concerned about their plant cane. Many fields were not planted under the best of conditions. Additionally, these fields have stayed wet since their planting. As plant cane, LCP 85-384 is known not to tolerate saturated soil. In previous wet winter years, the stands of cane for about twenty feet on either side of quarter drains that stayed saturated for much of the winter have been very weak. This occurred even though whole stalks of LCP 85-384 were used for seed.

It is much too early to make any predictions about the up coming crop. Growers are urged not to rush into fields and not to plow out cane too early.

The following reports were presented at the American Sugar Cane League's Annual Meeting on March 5, 2003 in Thibodaux, LA.

PROCESSING ENVIROMENTAL REPORT FOR 2002
Chairman Duane Legendre

Boiler HAPs Rules

The EPA rules on hazardous air pollutant (HAP) emissions affecting sugar mill bagasse boilers were recently published in draft form. The EPA is now considering public comments and recommendations. Final rules are expected before the end of 2003. In general, the proposed rule as now written is no big problem for existing boilers at Louisiana sugar mills. However, new boiler installations will be faced with requirements that are more stringent. The requirements will probably include continuous monitoring of carbon monoxide emissions. An effort is being made by several manufacturing associations, including cane sugar interests, to get EPA to make the rules more practical and "user friendly." If successful, these efforts should help Louisiana sugar mills that enlarge or otherwise eventually become impacted by these regulations.

New Source Performance (NSP) Rule Enforcement

In November 2002, EPA promulgated final rules reforming new source rules enforcement. The revised rule reestablishes air emissions permit holders to repair or replace worn out equipment at an old plant. Unlike the Clinton EPA ruling, that old plants in need of repair must be entirely replaced by the most current pollution control technology, sugar mills can now (again) repair damaged boiler components without risk of enforcement action.

Particulate Matter $PM_{2.5}$

Only a few years ago, the national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) for particulate matter (PM) was tightened, narrowing the focus to particles 10 microns in size or smaller (PM_{10}). More recently, the standard was again tightened to particles 2.5 microns in size or smaller. Sugar mills have been ordered to report $PM_{2.5}$ emissions per calendar year 2002 by a March 31, deadline. Failure to make a correct and timely report is a punishable offense. Although there was no means available to actually measure such $PM_{2.5}$ emissions, these must be estimated by an approved method or simply report $PM_{2.5}$ emissions as the same as PM_{10} emissions (which is always higher) and pay the higher rate of tax assessment per ton of emissions. The cost of measuring $PM_{2.5}$ is enormous. Few if any state environmental agencies have the financial or technical ability to do these measurements. It will be interesting to see how this is actually enforced.

DEQ Rules Enforcement

Recently accusations by environmentalists alleging DEQ's inadequate enforcement of rules, especially those related to NPDES permits regulating wastewater and stormwater discharges, has led them (the environmentalists) to demand that EPA take back enforcement authority delegated to DEQ. The sugar industry will have to wait and see the outcome of this development. DEQ's response to these recent accusations is stating that the agency is "under funded." The 2002 Legislature inevitably responded by allowing DEQ to increase fees on permits by an additional 30 percent.

AGRICULTURAL ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT
Chairman Bobby Judice

Smoke And Mud 2002

This year, due to the wet conditions during the harvest, there were very few complaints from the public about smoke and ash. Due to the nearly constant rain during harvest, most cane was harvested green with very little cane burned before harvest. Fields were extremely muddy, however growers were very diligent and did a good job of keeping the roads as free of mud (as possible.) It may have been the severity of the weather, but there were not a significant number of complaints from the public about the mud on the highways. The number of accidents was relatively low considering the poor conditions during harvest.

Atrazine Reregistration

During 2002, atrazine was in the process of being reregistered. Negotiations continued up to the last minute, with the compound's manufacturer (Syngenta) and the EPA reaching

an agreement at the last minute, just before the deadline.

One of the sticking points during the talks was the amount and the method of measurement of the compound in surface water. One of the areas that has a problem is the Upper Terrebonne Basin. There is heavy use of atrazine by both cane and corn growers during the months of February, March, and April. During this time period, high spikes of atrazine have been found in the drinking water at the Iberville water plant. The talk floating around was that the EPA wanted to set the standards so that if the levels spiked one time above the expectable number, they would pull the use of the chemical in the basin. However, through tough negotiations by Syngenta the regulations were written so that the testing period would stretch over a rolling 90 days sample period, and that the tests for atrazine in unfinished water would have to average 37.5 ppb (billion) before any actions would be taken (possible loss of use.)

TMDL and Clean Water Act

The TMDL provisions of the Clean Water Act have been and still are a matter of concern for agriculture. The original waste load allocation programs were aimed exclusively at "point sources" of pollution such as municipal, industrial and institutional discharges. The new program (TMDL) regulations were interpreted by Federal Courts to include "non point" sources of pollution such as farms, forests, urban stormwater discharge and natural conditions such as stream bank erosion. If implemented, and if there were no allocations for harvesting woodlands, or for changing pastureland to row crop, such actions could be stopped by nuisance lawsuits.

A recent (July 2, 2002) ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit has put the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) situation in a much better light. It overturns a "consent decree" (Georgia) requirement that the EPA also prepares and promulgate immediately the "implementation plans" that must be in place before TMDLs can be "enforced." More importantly, the ruling says that Federal Courts do **NOT** now have the authority to require EPA to prepare such plans, and that Federal Law presently leaves the responsibility for developing such plans and implementing them with the state governments.

The EPA is proceeding with its Court derived authority to set TMDLs, and did so here in Louisiana for the Ouachita River Basin at the end of May 2002. Because there was no good scientific data, the waste loads were set using untested models, which may set standards that are unattainable. The sugar industry must keep a close eye on this program and keep our Congressional representatives informed of any threats to agriculture.

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality recently prepared a general plan for addressing the state's non point source water quality management problems. This plan relies on the cooperation of all interests, including agriculture, in developing voluntary and/or government subsidized programs to reduce non point sources of pollution. It is most urgent that the cane industry keeps a close eye on this program. State officials want and need farmers' cooperation in determining optimum farming practices and assisting in obtaining funds for demonstration projects.

Master Farmer Program

The AgCenter is now in the process of implementing the "Master Farmer Program" for the different watersheds in the state. The "Master Farmer Program" is an educational "environmental stewardship" program that addresses many of the concerns that are raised by the possible implementation of TMDLs. If you have an opportunity to participate in this program, please do. The program is very educational. By participating, it indicates that we (cane farmers) are doing our part to help improve water quality in the state of Louisiana.

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CENTRAL RESEARCH REPORT
Chairman Craig Caillier

At the request of Chairman Caillier, the following report was presented by Windell Jackson:

In an effort to keep the report as brief as possible, no data will be presented. The results of research conducted during 2002 will be presented in the "Bulletin", at grower and

processor meetings, and at field days during 2003. In 2002, you the membership of the American Sugar Cane League, supported sugar research and researchers at a level of a little more than $1,000,000. Of the funds spent for research, about 55% was directed toward the variety development program. The harvest season of 2002 is an indication of how valuable an erect variety is to the Louisiana Sugar Industry.

Most research projects start out as small plot tests. Most of these small plot tests start on one of the Sugar Research Stations. From there, in most cases, they will go to large plot tests on grower-operated farms. I would like to thank the many growers, processors, suppliers, and manufacturers for their assistance and cooperation, both physical and economical.

For the past two or three harvests, the "good folks" at Cameco have provided a combine harvester to both the LSU and USDA Sugar Cane Research Stations. Through their generosity, Cameco has greatly supported sugarcane research in Louisiana. This past fall the effectiveness of the variety selection program would have been severely hampered if the stations had not had combine harvesters during the selection season. I would like to express upon behalf of those researchers working at the stations and the sugar industry, THANK YOU, Cameco.

In closing, the researchers working for, you the sugar industry, are always proud to show off their work and request that you visit them at the stations.

California Tour

Jimmy Flanagan, Iberia County Agent, is taking names for a tour to California.

This years farm tour will depart from the New Orleans airport on Saturday, June 7th to San Francisco, California. The tour will begin in and around the Frisco area, then work their way down through the Napa Valley, the Salinas valley, the San Joaquin valley, and finally the Imperial valley. They will visit vegetable farms, Winery's, seed company's packing and processing operations, a co-generation plant, livestock operations, sugar beet and sugarcane operations, a bio-mass production plant, etc. The tour will conclude on Saturday, June 14th, as they depart from the Los Angeles airport for New Orleans. The tour package includes airfare, room reservations, and motorcoach fees. The approximate cost will be $850 per person.

If you are interested, please mail your intentions to:
Jimmy Flanagan, Iberia County Agent
Suite B-110, Courthouse Bldg., 300 Iberia St., New Iberia, LA 70560
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THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

State Budget Realities

No one knows better than growers about the tough realities of trying to flesh out a budget with less revenue and higher costs. State legislators will very shortly begin the (now) annual effort to pay "the piper." Tough decisions must be made. With budget deficits in the hundreds of millions of dollars some drastic cuts are in order.

Health care is a very visible target since it is the largest overall item in the state budget. But there are problems with cuts in health care. Federal match money is liberal and when a state appropriation is cut, you lose the effect of that money PLUS a three to one match in federal money. So you get a triple budget whammy if you try to make adjustments here. Cutting the Charity Hospital system for instance can also cause ripple effects by pushing sick poor folks, who can't pay for their treatments, into hospitals where the uncompensated expense of treating the poor shows up on your bill. That is where the five-dollar aspirin comes from. But, from all indications, health care is the first place the 2003 legislators will start to look to make ends meet.

Another point of relief is the new Constitutional amendment passed last year, which allows the legislature to cut across the board in all departments. In the past almost two-thirds of the budget was protected from cuts by constitutionally protected mandates. Now we can cut up to 5% of most budgets. Nearly a hundred million can be cut with this approach, but the system has critics who say the general cut is blind to fairness.

This annual conundrum of rising costs and stagnant revenues is a topic of hot debate and very little agreement. But, there are some realities to consider. The budget will go up by millions each year even if we don't hire an additional person or start a new program due to scheduled salary increases, rent increases, and general inflation.

And then there is the sacred cow of education. Efforts for reform in education spending are scary. Bus loads of teachers show up on the Capitol lawn with a mean look in their eye and a promise to vote in large numbers if they don't get their way. Citizens on the Capitol lawn are frightening to even the bravest law maker and in truth, teachers are underpaid and over worked. And, they may not be where the money for education is being spent. On a per capita basis, Louisiana has for the past 25 years, funded K-12 education at about average for southern states while teachers' salaries are next to last.

The state education budget is constructed by local school boards and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), and maybe the problem is that these folks have put the money elsewhere. During the last 25 years, the total number of students in public schools has decreased by over 134,000 students (a 15% drop), while employees increased by almost 21,000 (a 25% increase) and funding grew by a stunning $1.7 billion - a 390% increase.

Tax increases are not allowed in odd numbered years so the budgeting process will be brutal and maybe even creative. The session begins soon.

By Dr. Don F. Day
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

Methods for Dextran Analysis

Both much and little has changed since this subject was reviewed ten years ago. The methods for analysis of dextran in sugar streams can be broken down into those methods that require separation of the polymer from the sample prior to analysis and those which measure the dextran in the "unmodified" sample. Because dextran is not one molecule but a family of molecules, varying in size and degree of branching, unified by the presence of a backbone containing primarily 1,6 linked glucose molecules our industry has avoided the complication of defining the individual dextran molecules by comparing all results to a "standard" dextran, a primarily linear, 2 million molecular weight dextran known as T 2000.

Those methods that require prior separation of the dextran from sucrose are the Haze method, the Roberts Method and the ASI 2 method. These procedures all enrich dextran from the test sample by concentrating it through alcohol precipitation. This has the added benefit of removing much of the other contaminating polysaccharides and sugars. The major interfering polysaccharide is starch, as starch also precipitates in the same alcohol concentration as dextran. These procedures require some method for removing starch prior to alcohol precipitation, usually by hydrolysis with amylase. The detection method for dextran in the precipitate varies with the procedure, in part dictating the usefulness of the procedure. A high specificity for dextran is required for detection in juice where there can be "non starch" polymers and/or simple sugars that may interfere with the method of analysis and a less specific method can be used for sugar where crystallization has already separated most of the interfering compounds. A summary of the analytical methods, which utilize prior separation, is given in Table 1. The method of detection varies from simple turbidity measurements to colorimetric assays for sugars in or produced from the dextran.

Table 1. Analytical Methods requiring Dextran Separation from the Sample

Method	Detection	Method for Separation	Utility
Haze	Turbidity	50% EtOH to precipitate dextran	sugar
Roberts	Color Formation	80% EtOH, detects all dextran	sugar
ASI 2	Color Formation	80% EtOH + enzyme specificity	juice

The methods that don't require a primary separation, but rather can be used on "unmodified" samples are Near Infrared Red (NIR) spectroscopy (as used by Optical Activity, Inc.), the Quick Haze test and the MCA™ antibody test kit. The NIR method uses a change in NIR spectra after dextranase treatment to quantitate the dextran present. In present format it overestimates the amount

of dextran present in juice samples, but correlates reasonably well with the Haze test for sugar. The Quick Haze is based on the supposition that all or most of the dextran precipitates in 50% alcohol. Because it ignores potential errors due to other polysaccharides it is useful only for quick estimates of the amount of dextran present. The MCA test correlates well with the Haze test and works on most samples, requiring only a clarification of samples prior to analysis. Table 2 summarizes the analytical methods that do not require dextran separation prior to analysis.

Table 2. Analytical Methods not requiring Dextran Separation from Samples

Method	Detection	Method for Specificity	Utility
Quick Haze	Turbidity	50% EtOH	Juice, an estimate only
OA (NIR)	Spectral change	Enzyme specificity	Sugar, overestimates in juice
Antibody (MCA)	Turbidity	Antibody specificity	All streams

What is in the future for dextran analysis? Both instrumental and wet chemistry methods will continue to improve and at some point the Haze method will be replaced as the standard with a more rapid and versatile method. Point of source (cane wagon?) methods will become economical for mills, expanding the options of the Factory Manager in controlling the quality of his cane supply. To this end Audubon is researching a di stick method, which will allow rapid screening of cane wagons. It works much like an indicator paper (similar to pH or glucose papers) and is based on antibody technology.

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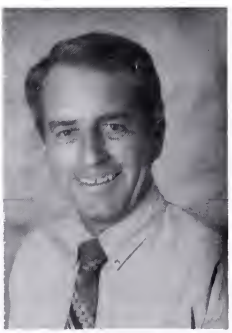

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NEW DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide

For Louisiana Sugarcane

Spring Application.

New DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide is formulated as a dispersible granule, packaged in a resealable 20-pound poly bag. This new product may be applied at a maximum single application rate of 4 pounds broadcast per acre and not to exceed 11.25 pounds per year. At this rate, K-4™ delivers an amount of active ingredient equivalent to 1 quart of DuPont™ Velpar® L plus 2.25 pounds of Karmex® DF per broadcast acre. Now, with K-4™, you can get the same outstanding performance on tough weeds and grasses that you've come to expect from Velpar® L plus Karmex® DF in one convenient, easy-to-use resealable bag.

Untreated

Treated with new DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide.

New DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide offers:

- Performance—Excellent residual control of tough weeds, including seedling johnsongrass, browntop panicum, broadleaf signalgrass, morningglory and a variety of winter weeds. Plus suppression of bermudagrass.
- Burndown—Excellent burndown of small established weeds and grasses. An ideal tank-mix partner with Gramoxone or Weedmaster/2-4,D on well-established weeds and grasses.
- Ease of handling—The new DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide for sugarcane dispersible granule has great suspendability. Unlike Prowl, DuPont™ K-4™ will not stain, has no odor and has preemerge activity on both broadleaves and grasses.
- Value—Provides economical broad-spectrum control of weeds and grasses in one easy to use product.
- Less weather-dependent—K-4™ herbicide for sugarcane affords up to a two-week window for rainfall activation.

For more information.

To learn more about new DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide, contact Toby McCown at (337) 794-2194 or your local DuPont Crop Protection Retailer. And visit us on the Web at: **K4.dupont.com**

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This reference guide is not intended as a substitute for the product label for the products referenced herein. Product labels for the above products contain important precautions, directions for use and product warranty and liability limitations that must be read before using the product. Applicators must be in possession of the product labels at the time of application. Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix combinations.

The DuPont Oval Logo, DuPont™, The miracles of science®, K-4™ and Velpar® L are trademarks or registered trademarks of DuPont. Karmex® DF is a DuPont registered trademark and licensed to Griffin, LLC. Prowl and Weedmaster are registered trademarks of BASF Corporation. Gramoxone is a registered trademark of Syngenta Crop Protection. Gramoxone is a restricted-use pesticide. Copyright © 2002–2003 E.I. du Pont de Nemours and Company. All Rights Reserved. 2/03.

DuPont™ K-4™ Takes the "Yellow" out of Sugarcane Farming

Recently registered by the EPA, DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide is an effective alternative to the standard herbicides. A new formulation of hexazinone and diuron, DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide provides the same broad spectrum of weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF in a single, water dispersible product. It doesn't stain or bleach, and the new product controls or suppresses the main weed culprits in the sugarcane industry: bermudagrass, morningglory, itchgrass and seedling johnsongrass. "I prefer K-4™* over Prowl® and Command®," says Louisiana sugarcane farmer Mike Melancon. "It has very little smell, it's easy to mix, and it's easy to clean up. There's a big, big difference."

Since some of Melancon's fields lie adjacent to a subdivision, he is particularly sensitive to spraying herbicides that stain or smell. "Most farming in South Louisiana is intermingled with neighborhoods," he explains. "We don't have huge blocks of land, like they do in Florida. We have some isolated areas with 300- or 400-acre blocks, but most everything is 40 acres here, 100 acres there. K-4™ will fit well in these areas."

K-4™ is available in 20-pound bags in a highly soluble XP formulation that will treat five acres at four pounds per acre.

Moisture Activates Material

A water-dispersible granule, K-4™ is absorbed through the roots and foliage of weeds. Moisture is required to activate the material in the soil. Best results are obtained when the applications are made to a firm, well-prepared seedbed that is moist at the time of application and when 0.5 to 1.0 inches of rainfall is received within two weeks of application.

Before K-4™, Melancon used a combination of Prowl®, diuron, Gramoxone® and 2,4-D in the springtime to control itchgrass, seedling johnsongrass and morninglories. "I've taken to trying a little K-4™ year-round, and backing off other chemicals," Melancon explains. "Basically, K-4™ does what the others do, plus suppression of bermudagrass."

Bermudagrass has been a continual problem for sugarcane growers, demanding a wide variety of chemical inputs through the years. "Virtually nothing I put out in the spring is geared towards bermudagrass control," says Melancon. "Bermudagrass management begins in the fallow season and at planting. In the fallow, K-4™ is a good fit. We've found that by applying K-4™ after we have worked our fields and reestablished our rows, we could basically keep our fields weed-free. The key to a successful weed control program is to do a good job with the fallow fields. This is your foundation. We continue this program with an application of K-4™ immediately after planting."

Application Versatility

K-4™ also has great application versatility. It can be used for preemergence control of annual grasses and broadleaf weeds in newly planted sugarcane, stubble sugarcane and fallow land intended for future sugarcane planting. All applications should be made at the labeled rate of 3.75 to 4.0 lb. per acre.

- **Newly Planted Sugarcane**: Applications should be made immediately following planting and row packing and prior to crop emergence.

- **Stubble (Ratoon) Sugarcane**: For best results, applications should be made immediately following harvest and prior to subsequent weed germination. K-4™ may also be applied postemergence to stubble sugarcane until the crop reaches a height of 18 inches. After the sugarcane exceeds a height of 18 inches, K-4™ may be applied as a post-directed spray up to 140** days before harvest. If weeds are present at application, a tank mix partner is recommended for improved postemergence control. In addition, a non-ionic surfactant or crop oil concentrate is recommended when weeds are present at application.
- **Fallow (To be Planted to Sugarcane)**: Applications should be made to newly prepared seedbeds that are free of clods and existing vegetation. Make fallow applications of K-4™ at least 60 days prior to sugarcane planting.

K-4™ is Safe for Sugarcane

As part of a DuPont research project, Melancon applied K-4™ as a test plot on a portion of his 2100-acre farm to evaluate sugarcane response to both spring and layby applications of the herbicide. Melancon observed that when used at planting, K-4™ is safe for the crop and provides excellent, broad-spectrum weed control.

"That's a big plus," Melancon notes. "K-4™ also allows us to get into stubble fields in February and early March as weather permits. We don't have to wait until late March and April to apply herbicide the instant before our grass is going to emerge and risk having wet conditions. This is a big advantage with this product."

And the packaging of K-4™ is much easier to handle. "The dry formulation will allow us to get away from the hassle of handling and transporting large volumes of liquid products," said Melancon. "This means that I will be able to do away with a trailer that I use to haul these products in bulk tanks."

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* Reference to K-4™ by Mike Melancon includes tank-mix combinations of hexazinone and diuron at the ratio found in DuPont™ K-4™.

**Louisiana Only. "Special Local Need" (24C) label is required for applications up to 140 days prior to sugarcane harvest.

Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix applications.

DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide is a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron that provides the same broad spectrum of weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF in a single, convenient water dispersible product.

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AUDUBON SUGAR INSTITUTE
Short Course Schedule - 2003

The range of short courses provided by Audubon Sugar Institute has been revised and updated. Some of the courses will be run in April, May, June and others which are more practically oriented, will be run in August. Applications for enrollment are now being accepted.

The following courses qualify for Continuing Professional Development for registered Professional Engineers. Each day qualifies as seven Professional Development hours (PDH). Each course comes with a comprehensive set of notes and lunch is included in the fee.

1. Vacuum Pan Instrumentation and Control - April 10, 2003 - $200.00
Instructors – Dr. David Love, South Africa, Scott Barrow, ASI
This course gives an introduction to the measurements, which can be used to assist pan boiling and identifies their suitability for different applications. It gives an introduction to the automatic control of vacuum pans and identifies the critical issues in pan boiling control. The types of hardware and software that can be used are identified. The advantages in terms of product quality and pan capacity are outlined.

2. An Introduction to the Technology of Sugar Production - May 19-20, 2003 - 500.00
Instructors – Dr. Harold Birkett, Dr. Peter Rein, ASI
This course will be helpful to the non-technical manager in the sugar industry, as well as suppliers or customers of the sugar industry. It provides an overview of the important aspects of sugar production and introduces issues that affect capacity and costs, and the factors that reduce losses and improve quality.

3. Polysaccharides and Dextran - May 22, 2003 - $200.00
Instructor – Dr. Donal Day, ASI
This course gives an introduction to the subject of polysaccharides, a range of carbohydrates that affect sugar processing, such as dextran, starch and gums. It should give a manager or an operator the background to understand and cope with their effects. The origin of the polysaccharides and the way they are affected by the sugar processes are covered, as well as the serious effects they can have on recoveries. Microbiological control to minimize formation of polysaccharides in harvesting, storage and extraction are covered. Methods of analysis and the implications of the measurements will be addressed.

4. Continuous Vacuum Pan Boiling - May 23, 2003 - $200.00
Instructor – Dr. Peter Rein, ASI
This course provides an introduction to continuous pan boiling. It covers the basic concepts, the type of equipment used, the advantages and disadvantages of continuous systems and operational issues. The requirements for successful continuous systems and the way in which continuous pans can be incorporated into expansion plans are highlighted.

5. An Introduction to Sugar Refining - May 27-28, 2003 - $500.00
Instructors – Dr. Peter Rein, Dr. Michael Saska, ASI
This course will provide a comprehensive overview and important aspects of sugar refining processes, from handling and storing raw sugar through to handling and storing white sugar. Issues relating to capacity, costs, losses and product quality will be discussed.

6. Technology Refresher - Improving Raw Sugar Factory Operations and Profitability - May 29-30, 2003 $500.00

Instructors – Dr. Harold Birkett, Dr. Peter Rein, ASI.

This course will provide an understanding of important sugar processes, from receiving cane through to the final product. Issues that affect capacity and costs, and areas on which to focus efforts to reduce losses and improve quality, will be introduced.

7. Cane Preparation and Milling - June 3-5, 2003 - $700.00

Instructor – Rod Cullen, formerly SRI and Bundaberg Sugar, Australia

This course will provide an understanding of modern cane preparation and milling technology, so that you can improve your own factory extraction process, or make the correct choice of plant and equipment.

8. Bagasse Boiler Operation - August 5-6, 2003 - $300.00

Instructor – Dr. Harold Birkett, ASI

This course is designed for foremen and engineers. The course will cover the factors that affect boiler capacity, efficiency and emissions. Both bagasse burning and natural gas burning boilers will be covered, although, bagasse burning boilers will be emphasized. Practical aspects are demonstrated on LSU facilities boilers.

9. Chief Chemist – August 11-14, 2003 - $650.00

Instructor – Dr. Harold Birkett, ASI

Instruction in this course centers on data required for performing daily, weekly, and crop reports. The course will include stock taking procedures and methods of checking computer-generated reports against theoretical considerations. This section is limited to 6 students.

10. Introductory Sugar Boiling – August 19-21, 2003 and possibly August 27-29, 2003 - $600.00

Instructors – Dr. Harold Birkett, Lenn Goudeau, ASI

This three-day course is designed for the student with no (or limited) sugar boiling experience. Each day consists of a one-hour lecture followed by sugar boiling in our 15 gal. (pilot) sugar pan. (This section is limited to 6 students. With sufficient interest a second course will be held).

11. Bench Chemist – August 25-28 - $650.00

Instructor – Jeanie Stein

This course covers sampling and analytical techniques used in raw sugar factories including analysis of incoming cane, process control samples and raw sugar. Instrumental techniques, instrument calibration and maintenance are also covered. This section gives hands-on experience and is limited to 6 students.

*** Delegates sponsored by a Louisiana Sugar Factory receive a 25% tuition discount. With sufficient interest, special courses can be arranged. For additional information, call 225-578-2211 or fax 225-578-2707 or email Peter Rein at prein@agctr.lsu.edu or see our website at www.lsuagcenter.com/audubon. Audubon Sugar Institute reserves the right to restrict numbers as necessary on a first come, first served basis, or cancel a course if there is insufficient support.*

2003 HIGH YIELD WINNERS
(2001) CROP

TOP 20 PRODUCERS

Rank	Grower	Acres	S/A
1.	Engemann Farms	1,560.0	9,421
2.	St. Rose Farms, Inc.	165.9	9,237
3.	Four Oaks Farm	1,016.0	9,222
4.	Ricky Rivet	151.0	8,830
5.	Martin & Poche, Inc.	712.3	8,769
6.	Randall Rivere Farm, Inc.	591.0	8,349
7.	A & B Farms	577.0	8,250
8.	Triple K & M Farms, Inc.	166.4	8,106
9.	Blanchard Farms, Inc. (Labadieville)	687.0	8,032
10.	Keith Zeringue	162.9	8,026
11.	SJM Farms, Inc.	347.3	8,022
12.	T. J. Sanchez & Son, Inc.	693.7	8,010
13.	Landry Farms	1,065.3	7,962
14.	Riverland Farms	168.0	7,765
15.	LeJeune Brothers	513.3	7,742
16.	Naquin Brothers, Inc.	1,358.1	7,738
17.	Glynn Rivet	2,659.6	7,725
18.	Square B Farms, Inc.	1,625.6	7,715
19.	B.J. LeJeune Farms	631.2	7,702
20.	B&W Farms, Inc.	1,440.6	7,681

PARISH WINNERS

Parish	Grower
Ascension	B & W Farms, Inc.
Assumption	Blanchard Farms, Inc. (Labadieville)
E. Baton R.	R & E Poche
Iberia	Lejeune Brothers
Iberville	Randall Rivere Farm, Inc.
Lafourche	Keith Zeringue
St. Charles	Big D Farms
St. James	St. Rose Farms, Inc.
St. John	Riverland Farms
St. Martin	Melancon SC Farms
St. Mary	Blanchard Bros., Inc. (New Iberia)
Pointe Coupee	Engemann Farms
Terrebonne	Triple K & M Farms, Inc.
W. Baton R.	Kernie Gros

DISTRICT WINNERS

TECHE DISTRICT

Category	Acres	1st Place Winner	2nd Place Winner
I	100-299.9	Clement, Clement & Broussard	Lloyd Huval, Jr.
II	300-699.9	LeJeune Bros.	B. J. LeJeune Farms
III	700-1,499.9	Blanchard Bros., Inc. (New Iberia)	Mark D. Patout
IV	1,500+	Square B Farms, Inc.	Melancon SC Farms

RIVER/ BAYOU LAFOURCHE DISTRICT

Category	Acres	1st Place Winner	2nd Place Winner
I	100-299.9	St. Rose Farms, Inc.	Triple K & M Farms, Inc.
II	300-699.9	Randall Rivere Farm, Inc.	A & B Farms
III	700-1,499.9.	Martin & Poche, Inc.	Landry Farms
IV	1,500+	Glynn Rivet	Woods Farm, Inc.

NORTHERN DISTRICT

Category	Acres	1st Place Winner	2nd Place Winner
I	100-299.9	Ricky Rivet	David Self
II	300-699.9	Keith Morris	R & E Poche
III	700-1,499.9	Four Oaks Farm	Kernie Gros
IV	1,500+	Engemann Farms	Joe Beaud, III Farms

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CLASSIFIEDS - FOR SALE

1992 Cameco S30 Single-row Harvester, cab & air, a/c, Front wheel pull, double scroll, extended gate 4 on 1, CAT engine. Call Joe Davis at (337) 276-4547 day or night or (337) 276-4778 evenings or (337) 519-2268 mobile.

JD 4840 freshly painted with new trans & engine overhauled in '97 - $11,000; **3-row Bottom Trip Plow International,** freshly painted, heavy duty and gauge wheels - $2,500. Call Damian Pierre at (337) 229-6932.

18 **Davis type heavy duty axles.** Complete with hubs and rims - $750 each. Contact Sidney Andras at (985) 446-1129.

4 Used 8/9 ton hydraulic high dump sugar cane wagons with walking beam axles and 18.4 wheels, good condition, $13,000 each; **New 10 ton hydraulic high dump sugar cane wagons.** For information call Bill Fagg at (337) 734-4558 or (337) 302-4430.

Reynolds 14C Scraper. Repinned, bushed,nd painted in 2001 - $12,500. Call John Gay at (225) 687-3683 office or (225) 776-2241 cell.

110 Volt Diesel Transfer **Fuel Pump** - $125; **Misc Bolts** with Bin - $200; Hot Water **Pressure Washer** - $400; Roanoke Machine Shop **Land Level** - $4,500; **Cane Row-marker** with Cylinders - $750; **Subsoiler** with 3 Shank (reinforced) - $1,000; **Dump Trailer** to use with Tractor - $750; **Puddler** for Cane Rows - $300; Custom **3-Row Cultivator** (heavy) w/o Off bars - $6,000; Custom **3-row Cultivator** with Off bars - $7,000; **JD 16' Flat Chopper** - $750; **Cane Row Packer** - $400; **JD Cultivator** w/o Off bars - $2,000; **JD Cultivator** with off bars - $2,500; Hydraulic Pull Type **Grader Blade** - $3,000; **Drag** for Headlands (heavy) - $700; **27' AMCO Disc** (1996) - $10,000; **500 gal. Saddle Tanks** with Frame - $600; **3 point Boom Sprayer** with Cylinders (no tank) - $250. Call Gonsoulin Farms, LLP at (337) 364-5885 or (337) 373-3942 mobile.

8 **Quality Trailers 48'** Call Travis Knott at (337) 230-1416 mobile or (888) 538-1751 pager.

Thompson 3-row Cultivator with off bars, new blades - $18,000. Call (318) 346-6174.

1982 Cameco Two-Row Harvester, cab & air, exc. cond. - $20,000; **2 Int'l 1066 Hi Crop Tractors** - $3,500 each; **2 Thompson 3-row Choppers** with off bars & fenders - $2,500 each; **3-row Row Marker** - $1,000; **3-row Lilliston Cultivator** - $800; **Amco** 15' Off set Heavy Duty new ground **Disc,** good cond. - $4,000; **18' Hydraulic Do-all** - $800; **Woods Ditch Bank Clipper** Hyd-fold PTO driven - $800; **14' Mohawk Bat Wing Clipper** - $800; **2-Ferguson Drain Machines** - $700 ea.; **3-row Sprayer** with Saddle Tanks & pump - $900; **Thompson 4-row** - $1,500; **V Ditcher** - $100; **Leblanc & Breaux Drain Machine** - $2,000; **Allis Chalmers 4-Bottom Plow** - $400; Single row **Ferguson Tiller** with buster - $500; Small **Dirt Scoop-** $400; **3-Push Back Planters Aid** - $450 to $1,000; **3-row Cap Off Plow** - $1,600; **50 gal. Anhydrous Amonia Tanks** on Wheels - $30; **2- 500 gal. Amonia Tanks** on wheels - $200 ea.; 2-**Single row Shavers** - $400; **Cameco Direct Haul Tandem Wagon** - $1,500; **Cameco Direct Haul Single Axle Wagon** $1,000; **Cameco 28 & 30 Tire & Wheels** - $100 to $500; **Single Row Sub-soiler** with Choppers & Packer - $500; **2 Drum Cane Planters** - $1,500 ea.; **4-Rolling Cutters** - $50 ea.; **Shoemaker 3-row** with Extra Parts - $500; **300 gal. Spray Tank** with Frame - $100; **500 gal. Elevated Water Tank** - $300; Numerous Int'l 856-1066-1466 parts; Int'l Weights - $20 ea; 1 set of 12.4x38 clamp on duals - $600; 1 set of 15.5x38 screw on duals -$400; 1 set of 12.4x36 duals for 856 thru 1066 - $300; Numerous hydraulic cylinders-$20 to $200; 80 gal. 2 stage 5 horse Power Compressor - $600. Call John Falcon, Jr. at (225) 473-6162 or (225) 717-0296.

CLASSIFIEDS - FOR SALE

1990 Case IH 9170 4 WD Tractor, engine, tailer and hitch. Rebuilt last year - $35,000; **8 - Davis Direct Haul Billet Wagons, 2 Gravois Direct Haul Billet Wagons.** Call Robert Lemann at (225) 717-3259.

8 - 1997 Bayou Service 10 ton direct haul billet wagons. Cal Mark or Don Bergeron at (985) 513-0406 or (985) 369-6618.

12 ft. Davis Planter Wagon, converted to 3-row Billet Planter - $15,000; 6 - **1991 Freightliner Cabovers**, 11.1 Detroit 60 series, 9- speed Rockwell Transmissions - $6,500 each.; 6 - **1991 Freightliner Cabovers**, salvage, 11.1 Detroit 60 Series. Good engines, transmissions & cabs - $1,500 - $4,500 each; 1997 2500 Cameco Combine Harvester - $95,000; 2 Cameco 10 ton Hydraulic Dump Wagns - $15,000 each. Call Eric Hebert at (337) 879-2494 Night or (337) 945-7812 Day.

1993 Austoft Harvester/Chopper. Excellent Condition. Updated in September 2000. Asking $65,000. Contact Ernest Lapeze at (225) 383-1628. If no answer, please leave message or you may call mobile at (225) 335-9246.

WANTED CLASSIFIEDS

WANTED: 1 Pair of Bottom Blades for Cameco two-row Harvester, also a Football Piler for Two-row Loader. Call Terrell Oubre at (337) 394-9211 or (337) 884-4231.

HELP WANTED: Large progressive farming and cattle operation in Jeff Davis Parish looking to hire individual who possesses a good work ethic with experience in crop production, spray applications, and/or herd management. Wages paid based on skill level and performance. References required. Please forward you application to Help Wanted, 602 W. Preen Lake Road, PMB 610, Lake Charles, LA 70591.

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ads in *The Sugar Bulletin* are for dues paying growers only. There is no charge for these classifieds. However, Beginning with the June, 2003 issue to guidelines will be as follows:

1. **Ads must be <u>typed</u> and <u>mailed</u> to The Sugar Bulletin, P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302-0938 no later than the 12th day of the month prior to the issue date in which it will be placed.**

2. **There will be a <u>10 item limit</u> with <u>only farm equipment</u> listed.**

3. **Ads will be placed for <u>two months</u> at a time only. If you wish to run for another two months, please call the League office at (985) 448-3707 prior to the due date.**

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THE SUGAR BULLETIN

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The Sugar Bulletin

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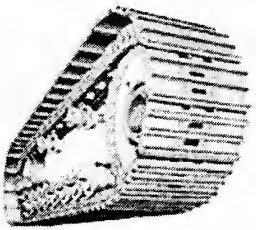

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

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Sugar Association

For all of the years, including those that predate my being at the League, the sugar industry has had some running battles in areas that have not been the high profile issues like that which a Farm Bill, Mexico trade, Stuffed Molasses, and other issues bring. But, quietly through the years, the Sugar Association has been the watchdog that has, without much recognition, fought those battles with "science." There seems to be more and more issues that arise in the nutritional arena as time goes on. To those issues, the SAI (Sugar Association, Inc.) responds.

Because of the other high profile issues that have always concerned this industry, because of the "put us out of business concern," we have not looked at SAI as a high profile organization. And, still to some degree, they quietly go about the business of keeping you in business. However, this organization to which the League belongs and is active, fights these battles with scientific validation rather than pure political posturing. And, again, to some extent, that is changing.

One of the simpler issues that the organization is promoting is the "labeling" issue. We are encouraging all sellers of sugar in this country to put the spoon-full logo on the package with the wording "15 calories per teaspoon: The Natural Sweetener." And, even though I say this is one of the simpler issues, not all sugar packaging in this country is presently carrying the logo. But, we're working on it.

Recently, a group of the panelist on a World Health Organization (WHO) Committee held a press conference that made adverse statements publicly about sugar and its consumption. The statements were not based in science and were perceived to be that of the entire WHO Committee, when in fact it was not. Such events happen and such events are damaging to our industry. The SAI is now working feverishly through USDA, our representatives to WHO, the Congress and others to correct this misinformation not supported by science or the WHO itself.

The Food Pyramid has been a constant concern for our industry as sugar is at the top of the Pyramid and, of course, is touted by many to be the "bad" food, when in fact, it is not. The Association (SAI) has always touted the fact that **all** food should be consumed in moderation. Over indulgence in any food, regularly, is not good for anyone. This basic premise, alone, is based in good science. Every five years, just as with the renewal of each Farm Bill, the revisiting of the science associated with the Food Pyramid is reviewed. Sometimes changes are made to the guidelines and it is our duty to make certain that

any changes are based in science and fact. So, the SAI stays close in its monitoring of those agencies that affect possible changes in the Pyramid.

Recently, there have been articles stating that High Fructose Corn Syrup is not the same as sugar in many ways. In fact, there are some studies that insist that the product is a "fat" attractant and that fructose syrup is not metabolized in the body the same as "natural" sugar. There will be much review of this information as it can have implied effects on our product, both pro and con.

The SAI has been fighting the connotation "sugars" (with an "s"). Somewhere along the line, and before my coming to the League, someone started lumping all sweeteners into one category rather than "sugar" and "other sweeteners." As an industry that would wish to see an increase in consumption, we also don't want the blame for that for which we are not gaining financial or any other advantage. We get enough of the bad press as "sugars." Wouldn't it be nice if the actual "sugar" consumption were 165 pounds per person annually? With that much consumption of "sugar" I think I would be happy to take some blame. But, when actual "sugar," rather than sweetener consumption is in the 30% range of all sugars / sweeteners, then that is a horse of a different color.

The SAI also pursues false advertising claims. The most evasive of the group is the Suzanne Summers ads which don't directly malign sugar, but the inference is definitely there. Recently there was an ad by Merck/Zocor that showed sugar as the "enemy." SAI, on the industry's behalf, intervened and was successful in getting Merck to pull the ad.

There are many occurrences where our product is maligned and attacked. The present growing issue of obesity is a prime example. SAI will continue to fight those inaccuracies. But, all of us always seem to be looking for someone else to write that letter or make that phone call. And, while I as the League's General Manager attempt to respond to those false and misleading situations, there is a part in this "play" for all of you as well. I have always believed in "grass root" politics and action. And, my dear friends, you are the Grass Roots that can respond, just as well as I. It may take a little time on all of our parts, but when people in all of our communities see multiple letters to the editor correcting misstatement, misquotes, or what have you, it shows the support for our industry that some perceive is not there. I could easily spend all of my waking hours responding to bad information in the press and media. But, when **you** respond, it is not just your paid gun speaking. It is, in fact, the voice of the people who live and die by good and bad information and good and bad press/media. I need your help! This is your industry. I can call and write, but the more people that involve themselves, the more that others understand our true strength. YOU!

The League and its other organizations that support your industry will continue to battle the misinformation that is out there. Additionally, ASI is attempting to be out in front on all health/ sugar issues, but there will always be some that catch us by surprise. In the meantime, if you see an article or a news clip and it bothers you, please respond. Sometimes just a note stating that what was printed was not totally truthful or correct is just as affective as a detail account of why the article was not correct. Remember that perception is reality. Many people perceive that the agriculture community is shrinking, but a vocal Ag community can make up for any loss of number. It's all about perception. In fact, perception is reality!

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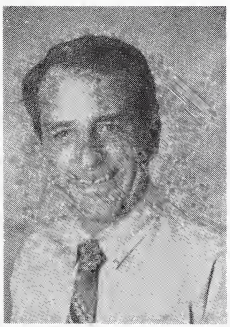

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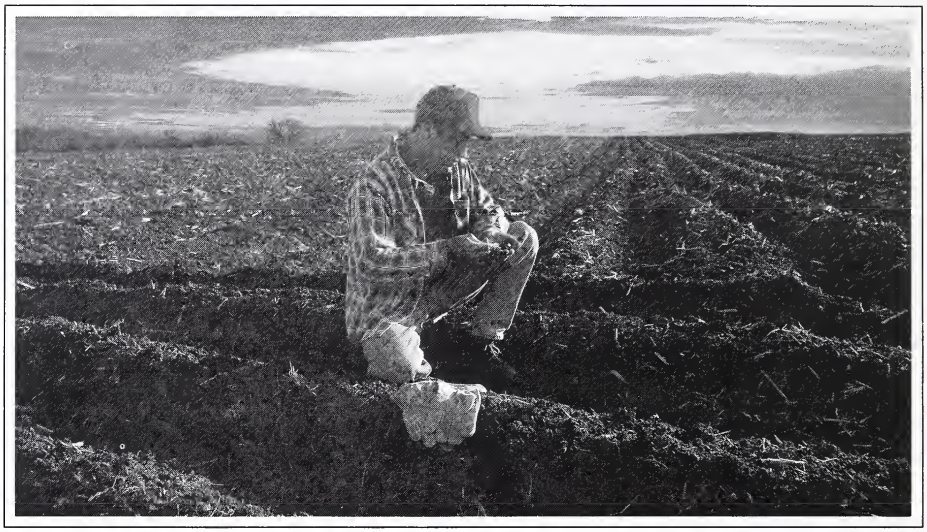

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WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Congress Agrees On A Budget Blueprint
House Subcommittee Chairman Briefed On US Sugar Policy
USDA Sending Trade Delegation To Mexico
USDA WASDE April Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The House and Senate in mid-April approved separate versions of the Federal budget blueprint and moved immediately into conference to negotiate a final budget bill. While the House plan includes a $550 billion tax cut, compared to $350 billion in the Senate plan, the conferees moved quickly to establish the basic spending parameters for all sectors of the federal government. Agricultural spending (Function 350) is increased by $165 million from FY03 to $24.6 billion, with discretionary spending at $5.6 billion and mandatory spending at $19 billion.

At these spending levels, it does not appear that agriculture will be forced to make severe cuts in mandatory spending to achieve discretionary savings, but the agricultural community will be closely watching the appropriations process to ensure that such attacks on agriculture spending are defeated. As before, the biggest challenge is likely to be an attempt to tighten payment limitations on general farm commodities. While sugar is immune from those attacks, since there is no direct payment to producers under the sugar program, we anticipate another direct attack on the sugar program during this difficult process of locking in FY04 spending for the entire federal government.

The conference report on the budget also includes a Senate-only provision creating a reserve fund to facilitate the funding of agricultural disaster assistance in the future.

House Subcommittee Chairman Briefed On US Sugar Policy

In early April, ASA economist Jack Roney was asked to provide a briefing on US sugar policy to the new Chairman of the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Specialty Crops, Rep. Bill Jenkins. Roney, joined in the briefing by the Washington, DC-based representatives of the sugar industry, provided an excellent overview of US sugar policies, domestic and trade, and Chairman Jenkins committed himself to learning more in order to provide leadership should sugar policies be attacked in Congress.

Chairman Jenkins, who is in his fourth term of office, owns and operates a family farm in northeastern Tennessee, producing beef cattle and burley tobacco. Jenkins, who is also an attorney, has been a consistent supporter of the sugar program during his congressional career.

Roney provided a similar briefing to interested House staff. This briefing was widely attended by staffers for the committee, personal offices of committee Members, and other staffers with an interest in agricultural issues. Another briefing focusing on Mexico trade issues was also provided to ranking Democrat, Rep. Charlie Stenholm, who is co-chair of the new US-Mexico Congressional Caucus, a group

of Members committed to expanding and improving the bilateral economic relationship between the two countries. Stenholm later received a briefing on Mexico from the Corn Refiners Association.

USDA Sending Trade Delegation To Mexico

Agriculture Undersecretaries J.B. Penn (Farm and Foreign Services) and Bill Hawks (Marketing and Regulatory Programs) will lead a delegation to Mexico later this month to discuss the various ongoing trade disputes between the two countries. Contacts with the Department have indicated that the sweetener dispute will not be a subject of the discussion and that USTR Ambassador Allen Johnson remains the lead negotiator on this complex and contentious issue.

USDA WASDE April Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its April World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 remained at 8,185,000 short tons, with beet and cane production remaining at 4,215,000 and 3,970,000 tons, respectively. The 2001/02 overall production and cane production estimates remained unchanged at 7,906,000 tons and 3,992,000 tons, respectively. 2001/02 and 2002/03 non-program imports were also unchanged at 81,000 and 60,000 tons, respectively, as were 2002/03 imports under re-export at 300,000 tons. This left the 2002/03 total imports estimate unchanged at 1,605,000 tons. Louisiana cane sugar production for 2001/02 and 2002/03 remain at 1,587,000 and 1,360,000 short tons, respectively. The amount of 2001/02 sugar held by CCC was unchanged at 212,000 tons. Ending stocks remained at 1,337,000 and the 2002/03 stocks-to-use ratio remains at 13.7 percent. For 2001/02, the stocks-to-use estimate was unchanged at 12.3 percent.

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report
Board Approves Dedicated Research Funding
Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

What is a normal year? Many growers are trying to compare the start of the 2003 crop year to what is considered a normal year. Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a normal year for sugarcane production in Louisiana. The question of what is a normal year was most probably best answered by Mr. Lloyd Lauden. Mr. Lloyd stated, "Boy, let me tell you this from the start. You will not be bored with this crop, nor will you ever know all that there is to know about sugarcane, and watch out for those who say they do. There are no two years of cane production ever the same. The weather has so much influence from year to year that it is impossible to make any 100% guarantees and there is no normal year." Of the many true statements pontificated on by Mr. Lloyd these certainly were true in 1973 and are still true today.

At the writing of this article on April 14, 2003, the crop has received the worst possible weather conditions that one could think. During the three-day period of April 4 - 6, the cane growing regions along Bayou Lafourche and the Teche received about seven inches of rain. In addition, on the 6th there were many reports of hail about the size of golf balls. There were no reports of damage to stands of cane from the hailstorm. Over the next couple of days however, the weather added insult to injury by dropping overnight temperatures to 37° Fahrenheit. There were several reports from the Houma area of rather thick frost on windshields of cars and the roofs of houses. In some cases, when water was sprayed to remove the frost, it froze solidly on the windshields. Other than very little browning of the leaf tips and the purpling of HoCP 91-555's leaves, no damage has been reported from this frost.

Even before the aforementioned rains, there were many fields in which the deep ruts were not completely drained of water. Needless to say , it will be quite some time before fieldwork will be done in those fields. It is the opinion of most "experts" that cane growth is about four weeks behind "normal."

From observations of fields along the Bayou and the River, Herman Waguespack is of the opinion that about 2/3's of the fields are off to a very good start and have the potential to produce a good crop. However, he indicates that stands of cane in about 1/3 of the fields that he has checked are very slow. Many of the fields, which are so slow in marking, are fields that were treated with Polado and were harvested early. Fields of younger stubbles, which had long term Polado, are starting to show some signs of life. The observations of the crop on the Teche are very similar to those reported by Herman. With the couple of dry weeks at the end of March, growers were able to accomplish much work in the fields. Most of the fields that were so weedy have been cleaned up by off-baring and with the

application of herbicide. Much more green cane is now visible in fields in which the removal of weeds, along with the removal of cane trash (harvest residue or regrowth), has been completed. Where the harvest residue or regrowth was not removed, the cane does **not** appear to have thick stands. Also, the bottoms and other slow-to-drain spots in plant cane fields are not populated as thickly as other areas in the same field. This is more common for plant cane in heavy soils than in light soils, and it does not matter if the fields were planted with billets or whole stalks.

The crop in the more northern River Region is slower than that of the more southern areas. In the Bunkie area, while making a quick tour during the first week in April, it was observed that only about half of the fields were marking fair. Many fields had no cane showing at all. Because of the long hauls and the traditionally lower TRS, a higher percentage of the cane acreage in the northern area is treated with Polado. There were a few fields of plant cane showing quite well, but most were still not marking well. When temperatures at night are consistently above 65°the crop will really start to improve. The "first trip" to the Bunkie area in the early spring each year makes one wonder at the ability of the cane grown in the region to makeup for its slower start.

Board Approves Dedicated Research Funding

At the March 5, 2003 ASCL Board Meeting Roddy Hulett, chairman of the Dedicated Research Finance Committee, reported the number of projects that his committee funded for 2003. Chairman Hulett reported that funding of $808,000 was requested for fifty projects, but unfortunately, the committee could only fund 42 projects for a total of $428,000. The amount and the number of requests were down from previous years. Many of the researchers expressed their knowledge of the industry's poor crop and for that reason they tried to make their requests as bare-bone as possible. For this reason, the research projects that were funded addressed problems that are vital to the Louisiana sugar industry. This year, as in past years, the bulk of the dedicated research funds are directed to the breeding program. The funding categories for the 2003 Dedicated Research Funding Requests were broken down into four main categories with several subcategories in each

The first category is "Crop Improvement," which has the subcategories of 1) Biotechnology, 2) Breeding-conventional, 3) Breeding-molecular, and 4) Physiology. The Crop Improvement category received the largest portion of the funding for a total of about $170,000. The second category was "Crop Production." This category includes the subcategories of 1) Cultural Practices and Ripening, 2) Economics, 3) Fertilization, and 4) Precision Ag. and it was funded for about $81,000. In the third category of "Crop Protection", which included the subcategories of 1) Entomology, 2) Plant Pathology, and 3) Weed Control, the proposals were funded for a total of $82,000. The final category is "Processing" which included in this category are the subcategories of 1) Alternative Products, 2) Cane and Juice Quality, and 3) Factory Processes and Losses. The total funding for this category was $97,000.

Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

The following is a summary of a project that was funded by the Dedicated Research Funding Committee in 2002. The full report for this project was printed in the March 2003 issue of "The Sugar Bulletin." Summaries that are available of the other projects funded for 2002 will be printed in upcoming issues of the Bulletin.

EVALUATION OF POTASSIUM-BASED RIPENERS AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO GLYPHOSATE AND THE EFFECTS OF 2,4-D ON HERBICIDAL CANE RIPENING

Blaine J. Viator, Calvin Viator, Windell Jackson, Herman Waguespack, Edward P. Richard, Jr.

In the large plot experiment, percent brix in the glyphosate-treated cane was consistently higher than potassium nitrate,

potassium carbonate, and the nontreated cane throughout the monitoring period. The potassium nitrate and potassium carbonate treatments were not statistically higher than the nontreated in most weeks, with the exception of the final measurements at 49 DAT in which juice brix of the potassium nitrate treatment was greater than the nontreated, but less than the glyphosate treatment. Analysis of the hand cleaned, twenty-stalk samples showed significantly higher TRS for potassium nitrate over the check at harvest; however, this was not detected in the commercial core samples. Potassium nitrate and potassium carbonate did not increase core sample TRS or sugar yield compared to the nontreated check. The slight increase in TRS at 49 DAT, evident in the hand samples, could indicate that the potassium nitrate was just beginning to induce ripening but not enough to be detected commercially. The small plot experiment conducted at the USDA research farm did not show an increase in TRS at 28, 35, and 42 DAT for either potassium nitrate or potassium carbonate. Since data was not taken after 42 DAT, it is not known if TRS increased for the potassium nitrate treatment at 49 DAT as in the large plot experiment.

As evident in the brix measurements, stalk samples, and commercial core lab data, 2,4-D at a rate of 0.95 lbs ai/acre did not adversely affect the activity of glyphosate throughout the ripening period in both large and small plot experiments.

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By Dr. Peter Rein
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The Importance of Achieving a High Crystal Content in High Grade Massecuites

The overall objective of sugar pan boiling is to crystallize as much sugar as possible, while still producing crystal of the required size and with a good size distribution. At the same time, it is desirable to achieve this with a minimum of pan capacity and without excessive use of steam or vapor. It is not often appreciated just how great an effect the crystallization work done in the A and B pans has on achieving these objectives. In fact the effect is huge, and the purpose of this article is to show just how important is the high grade pan boiling work.

In the first instance, if sugar boiling is important, it is necessary to measure how good or bad it is. Then it is important to understand these numbers and to look at them on a routine basis to monitor the efficiency of boiling.

Measurement of the efficiency of pan boiling

The degree of crystallization achieved is measured by the exhaustion, or alternatively by the crystal content, both expressed as a percentage. Exhaustion represents the percentage of sucrose in the massecuite recovered in crystalline form. It can be calculated from the SJM formula, assuming that the crystalline sugar has a purity of 100.

$$Exhaustion = 100 \cdot \frac{100(McteP - MolP)}{McteP(100 - MolP)} \qquad (1)$$

McteP represents the purity of the massecuite and *MolP* the purity of the molasses. We can alternatively look at the crystal content of the massecuite. It is really the crystal content of the massecuite that is the limiting factor in pan boiling. We need to get the crystal content as high as possible and the limit is the crystal content – if the massecuite crystal gets above a certain level, the massecuite will not flow out of the pan. The equation for crystal content, also expressed as a percentage, is similar to the equation for Exhaustion:

$$CrystalContent\%Mas\,\mathrm{sec}\,uite = 100 \cdot \frac{Brix\%Mcte(McteP - MolP)}{(100 - MolP)} \qquad (2)$$

By comparing the two equations, it can be seen that the relationship between Exhaustion and Crystal Content is:

$$Exhaustion = CrystalContent \;/\; sucrose\%mas\,\mathrm{sec}\,uite \qquad (3)$$

Sometimes crystal content is expressed relative to the dry substance or solids in the massecuite, thus excluding water. Then we have:

$$CrystalContent\%Solids = 100 \cdot \frac{(McteP - MolP)}{(100 - MolP)} \quad (4)$$

This is a simpler equation than equation (2), excluding the Brix of the massecuite. Thus it is inherently a less representative measure of pan stage work, because the Brix of the massecuite must be high to achieve a high crystal content. But in fact a high massecuite Brix is implied and is a prerequisite for high crystal content values and so this measure is still meaningful. This equation for crystal content % solids is the one reported on many Louisiana laboratory report sheets and so will be used in the subsequent discussion.

Purity drop is often used to assess the performance of a pan. This is not as useful because it depends too much on the purity of the massecuite itself. This will be illustrated later.

Practical targets for crystal content in massecuites

Crystal content is generally the limiting factor in a boiling. If the crystal content gets too high, the massecuite will not flow out of the pan and cannot be further processed. The limiting crystal content depends on the purity of the massecuite.

In Australia, Broadfoot and Pennisi (2001) suggested an equation for the limiting values of crystal content % solids. This is given by:

$$CrystalContent\%Solids = -0.019 \cdot (McteP)^2 + 4.2 \cdot McteP - 159 \quad (5)$$

It is stated that 90% of these limiting values should be achievable in practice. The equation for the Australian limits is shown plotted in Figure 1 below, together with some target values for South Africa and Louisiana, and with some season average values achieved in practice in South Africa (Lionnet 2001). The Australian equation appears to be applicable at high purity, but predicts values that are too low at lower purities.

Figure 1. Crystal content values as a function of massecuite purity

The same data shown in terms of purity drops are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Massecuite purity drop required to achieve target crystal contents.

Clearly purity drop is very dependent on the purity of the massecuite being considered. At high A massecuite purities, a lower purity drop can mean a higher crystal content. This indicates that purity drop is an inadequate measure of pan boiling and that crystal content and exhaustion are better figures to look at.

Typical practical targets which should be achievable with good boiling practice are as follows, for average massecuite purities:

	Massecuite Purity	CrystalContent % Solids	CrystalContent % Massecuite	Exhaustion
Refined boiling		64	57	-
A massecuite	85	57	52.5	67
B massecuite	70	42.5	40	61
C massecuite	55	30	29	55

Particularly with low grade boiling, these calculated numbers are affected by using apparent purities and refractometer Brix instead of true purities and true dry substance. However we are not concerned with C massecuites here – there are other issues affecting C massecuite boiling.

These numbers are based on refractometer Brix measurements. Use of spindle Brix inflates the calculated numbers. Most mills have changed or are changing to refractometer Brix, so in time this problem should disappear.

Effect of crystal content on quantities of massecuite to be boiled.

The quantities of A, B and C massecuite boiled for typical Louisiana conditions can be calculated. Results for A massecuite are shown in Figure 3, for a three boiling system, with A and B sugar bagged, and assuming typical average values.

Figure 3. Quantity of A massecuite to be boiled as a function of massecuite crystal content % solids values. Average purity values assumed are 85 syrup, 70 B massecuite and 55 C massecuite.

It can be seen from Figure 3 that as the crystal content rises from 50 to 60 (the upper limit), the quantity of A massecuite reduces by 4.3 cubic ft / ton solids in syrup, or a reduction of 16% in A massecuite. There is a reduction in total massecuite boiled of 8.5%, which means that the amount of steam or vapor on the pan floor drops by the same amount.

A similar exercise has been done for the effect of B massecuite crystal content on the quantity of massecuite boiled. In this case the quantity of B massecuite can be reduced by 3.1 ft^3 / ton solids. This represents a reduction of 20%, which is very significant.

In order to assess the potential improvement from average to good performance or from poor to good, the following results are obtained:

	Crystal Content % Solids		Massecuite Quantity (ft^3/ton Brix)			Relative Total Massecuite Quantity
	A	B	A	B	Total	
Good operation	60	47.5	22.4	12.6	44.0	0.93
Average operation	55	42.5	24.0	14.4	47.4	1.0
Poor operation	50	40	26.1	15.6	50.7	1.07

Effect on pan capacity and steam usage

It can be seen from the table that the amount of massecuite boiled, from the same amount of dissolved solids in syrup, can vary substantially, depending on the work done in the A and B pans. The amount of pan capacity needed is directly related to the amount of massecuite to be processed. Improving A and B pan operations can move a factory from needing 7% more than average pan capacity to 7% less than average, an improvement of 14% in total.

Not only is pan capacity affected by crystal content in A and B massecuites, but batch centrifugal capacity is also affected in the same way.

Steam or vapor usage is also directly related to massecuite quantities boiled. For the cases given above, for a factory processing 58 tons Brix in syrup/hour (roughly equivalent to a 10 ,000 ton/day factory), steam usage can be reduced from 67 to 58 ton/hr, a 15% reduction.

Effect on undetermined loss

When A massecuite is boiled with a high crystal content, more sugar is recovered from each boiling. Whatever sugar is not recovered will be subject to further boiling. If the crystal recovered in the A boilings is not high enough i.e. the exhaustion is too low, the molasses purity will be higher than necessary, and it may also require some A top-off boilings to be carried out.

The overall effect of low crystal content in A and B massecuites is that a higher volume of massecuite has to be boiled. This means that the overall time that the sugar is subjected to high temperatures is greater, and that more pan strikes are necessary. The effect of longer times is to increase sugar losses by a number of degradation mechanisms, and a consequence of more strikes is that more physical losses occur, because they are generally associated with the pan operations of striking, filling, cutting over, and starting up a boiling.

The consequences are a higher undetermined loss. It is very difficult to measure these losses, but in South African factories, a significant correlation between A exhaustion and undetermined loss was established. A reduction of 1 unit in A massecuite exhaustion was found on average to lead to an increase in undetermined loss of 0.1%. Translating this into crystal content numbers, a reduction of 1% in crystal content % solids would lead to an increase in undetermined loss of 0.12%.

Practical suggestions for improving A and B massecuite measured crystal content values

Achieving high crystal content values in high grade massecuites is not easy. It requires attention to a number of details simultaneously. But the effort is very worthwhile in maximizing recovery, making best use of available capacity and reducing costs. Here are some suggestions:

1) It is impossible to monitor and/or improve something unless it is measured. Mills have the data with which to calculate A and B crystal content, and these values should be looked at on a daily basis by those in charge of factory operation.
2) The factory parameter which has the greatest effect on crystal content is massecuite Brix. Ensure that A and B massecuite Brix values are run as high as possible.
3) Ensure that your pans circulate well. If they do not, you have to compromise either on massecuite Brix or strike height. Remove any surplus ironmongery from inside the pans which hinders circulation, and ensure that the condensate and incondensable removal systems are adequate.
4) If necessary, modify your pans and striking arrangements to handle high Brix massecuites. This may include installing a stirrer or steam assisted circulation (steam jigger), increasing the size of the massecuite outlet (fitting a butterfly value), modifying striking gutters, or making more serious modifications such as converting a flared pan to a straight-sided pan.
5) Divert pan steamings. These dilute the massecuites, and undo a lot of the good work done in the process. They should go back to syrup, or A molasses or a remelter, depending on the purity of the massecuite.
6) If you have A crystallizers, make sure they are always run full. If the drives are weak, reduce the stirrer element speeds.
7) Ensure that the minimum amount of water is used on the centrifugals to give the required sugar purity.
8) Ensure that the centrifugal ploughs are properly adjusted, so that they plough the screens clean. This is an often neglected area, and has a considerable effect on

exhaustion. It is a real waste of effort and money to allow some of the sugar crystallized out of the massecuite to be washed back into the molasses.

9) If the centrifugals are old and difficult to adjust to get clean baskets, consider molasses classification, where first run-off goes to molasses and later run-off back to syrup. This is not as beneficial as getting your screens clean in the first place. It helps keep molasses purities down but does not eliminate recycle.

References:

Broadfoot R. and Pennisi S.N. (2001). Pan/fugal station modeling for planning factory upgrades. Proc.Austr. Soc. Sugar Cane Technol. 23:351-360.

Lionnet G.R.E. (2001). Seventy-sixth annual review of the milling season in southern Africa (2000-2001). Proc. S. Afr. Sugar Technol. Ass. 6-27.

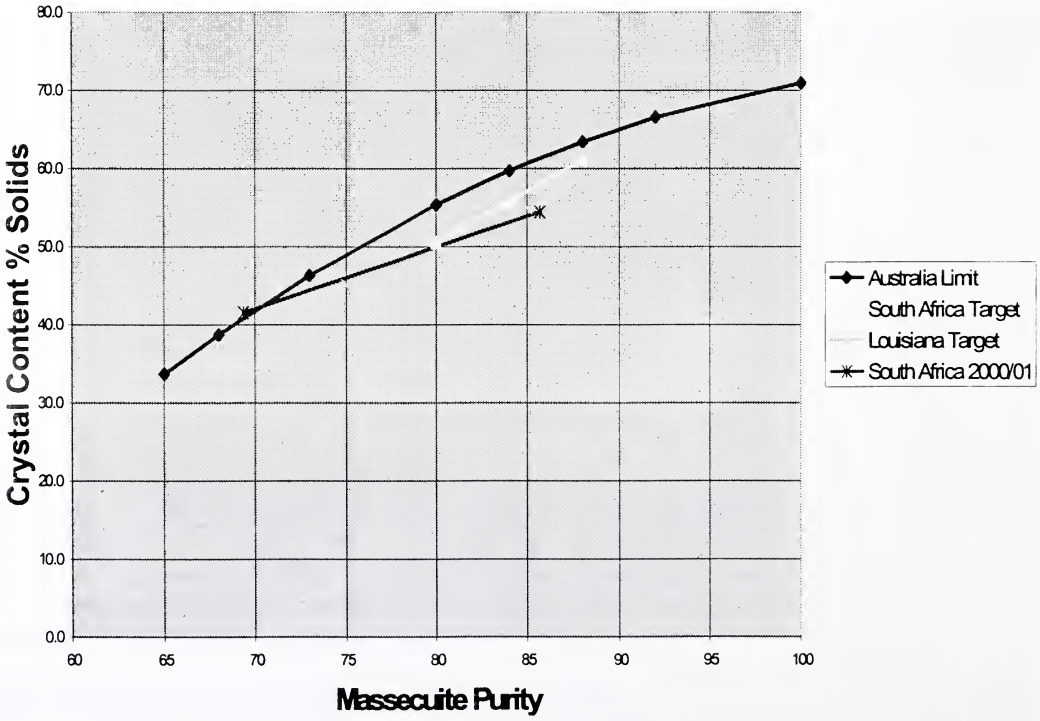


Figure 1. Crystal content values as a function of massecuite purity

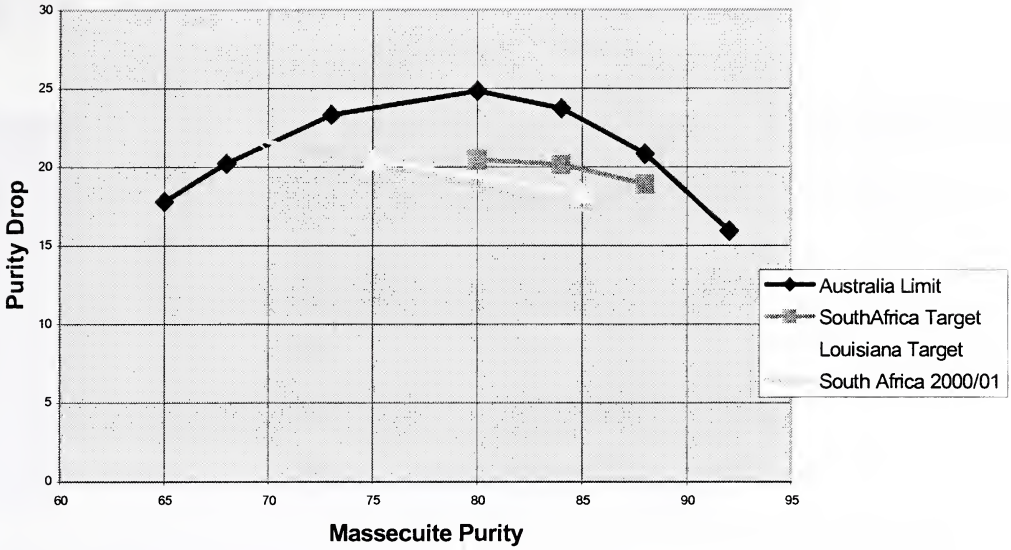


Figure 2. Massecuite purity drop required to achieve target crystal contents.

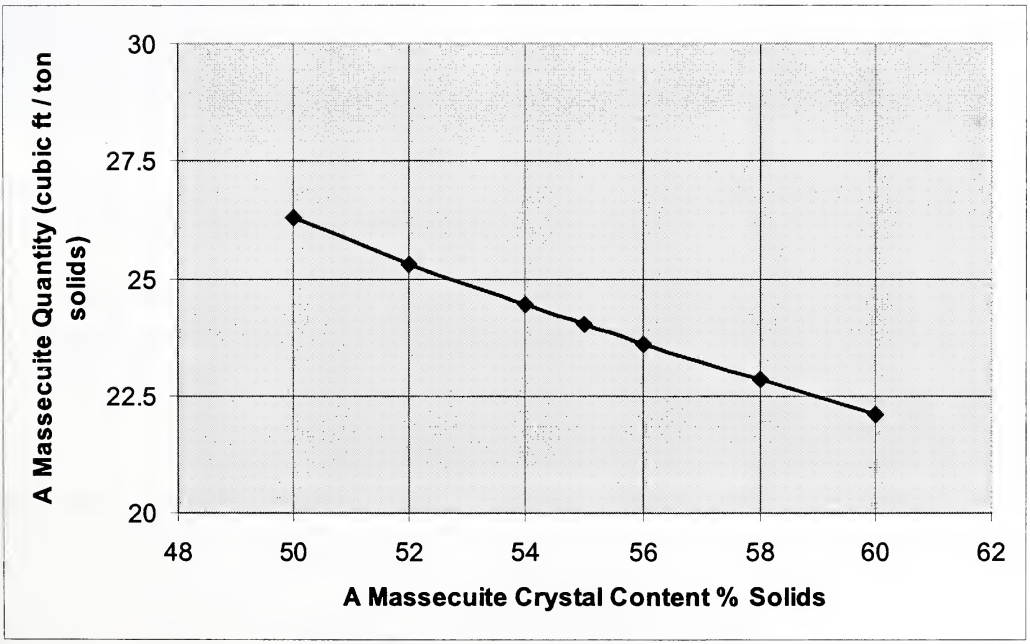


Figure 3. Quantity of A massecuite to be boiled as a function of massecuite crystal content % solids values. Average purity values assumed are 85 syrup, 70 B massecuite and 55 C massecuite

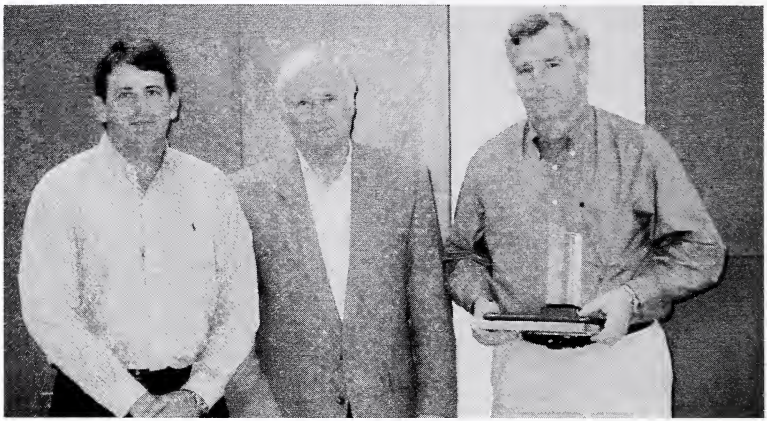
2003 HIGH YIELD WINNERS (2001 CROP)

Engemann Farms

Top 20 Producer
1st Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner - Northern District Category IV

Parish Winner - Pointe Coupee



Curt Engemann, Commissioner of Agriculture Bob Odom and Mark Engemann

St. Rose Farms, Inc. (No Photo Available)

Top 20 Producer - 2nd Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner River/Bayou Lafourche District Category I

Parish Winner - St. James

Four Oaks Farm

Top 20 Producer
3rd Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner - Northern District Category III

Herman Waguespack. Jr., League Agronomist; Miles Brasher, Pointe Coupee County Agent; Matt and Marty Frey; Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Ricky Rivet (No Photo Available)

Top 20 Producer -4th Place

1st Place District Acreage Winner - Northern District Category I

(continued on page 22)

NEW DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide

For Louisiana Sugarcane

Fallow.

New DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide at 4 pounds product per acre provides excellent control of annual grass and broadleaf weeds in fallow sugarcane fields. DuPont™ K-4™ in fallow is also the first step in suppressing bermudagrass in plant cane.

DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide is formulated as a dispersible granule, packaged in a resealable 20-pound poly bag. This new product may be applied at a maximum single application rate of 4 pounds broadcast per acre and not to exceed 11.25 pounds per year. At this rate, K-4™ delivers an amount of active ingredient equivalent to 1 quart of DuPont™ Velpar® L plus 2.25 pounds of Karmex® DF per broadcast acre. Now, with K-4™, you can get the same outstanding performance on tough weeds and grasses that you've come to expect from Velpar® L plus Karmex® DF in one convenient, easy-to-use resealable bag.

NEW DuPont™ K-4™

NEW DuPont™ K-4™

New DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide in fallow provides:

Easy-to-use formulation—DuPont™ K-4™ is easy to contain, has no odor and will not stain.

Safety to plant cane—Make fallow applications of K-4™ at least 60 days prior to sugarcane planting.

Residual—Longer-lasting control and greater flexibility vs. non-residual herbicides.

Efficiency—Fewer trips equal reduced labor and equipment costs.

Economics—Reduction in Roundup Ultra or Touchdown applications.

Preservation—Provides row integrity and moisture for better plant cane establishment.

Conservation—Maintain valuable plant nutrients.

Performance—Excellent program to help in reducing itchgrass and johnsongrass (from seed) populations in plant cane.

For more information.

To learn more about new DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide, contact Toby McCown at (337) 794-2194 or your local DuPont Crop Protection retailer. And visit us on the Web at: **K4.dupont.com**

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The miracles of science®

This reference guide is not intended as a substitute for the product label for the products referenced herein. Product labels for the above products contain important precautions, directions for use and product warranty and liability limitations that must be read before using the product. Applicators must be in possession of the product labels at the time of application. Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix combinations. Always wear proper protective equipment.

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New DuPont™ K-4™: Tough on Bermudagrass; Begin the Fight in Fallow

Louisiana sugarcane growers can now use new DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide for improved management of bermudagrass—compared to traditional programs—without the application hassles, unpleasant odors or problems with staining.

K-4™ herbicide is a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron in a single, water-dispersible product that is now registered by the EPA for use in Louisiana sugarcane. The new product offers the same broad-spectrum weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides but with the convenience of an easy-to-use resealable bag. K-4™ is formulated as a highly soluble, dispersible granule and sold in 20-pound bags that will treat five acres at a rate of 4 pounds per acre. K-4™ is absorbed through the roots and foliage of weeds and grasses. For best weed control, at-planting applications should be made to a well-prepared, clod-free seedbed that is free of excess plant residue.

For the past several years, Louisiana sugarcane growers have reported improved management of bermudagrass with Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides—now K-4™. They'll continue to see effective suppression using new K-4™.

Charlie Levert, Louisiana sugarcane farmer from St. Martin Parish, is looking forward to using new K-4™ based on his experience with Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides.

"Our biggest grass pressure is bermudagrass," said Levert. "When you get a rainy season just like we've had last year, it's hard to get it. As soon as you chop bermudagrass in fallow, rain spreads it. But Velpar® and Karmex® (K-4™) suppresses it enough in fallow to get us to planting."

Levert follows his fallow program with a broadcast application of Velpar® and Karmex® (K-4™) at planting to maintain bermudagrass suppression. With the treatment and a good stand of plant cane to help shade out bermudagrass, Levert feels he is getting a handle on his bermudagrass before it establishes and becomes a major problem.

Al Broussard, a sales representative for 28 years with Helena Chemical Company in St. Martinville, La., introduced Levert to the Velpar® plus Karmex® tank mixture—now K-4™—two years ago.

"In this sugarcane area, we have specific weed problems that not all herbicides control," said Broussard. "I became interested in Velpar® 20 years ago when we were looking for something to control itchgrass. Since then, bermudagrass has become a key weed for us because when you control all the other weeds, bermudagrass blossoms as it has no competition, except for the cane."

"When we plant cane in the fall on land that has a history of bermudagrass on it, and we've done a good job cultivating and using multiple applications of Roundup on it in the fallow, we can get rid of a lot of it. The last couple of years we have had pretty good results with Velpar® plus Karmex® (K-4™) suppressing bermudagrass."

"We looked at Velpar® plus Karmex® in fallow applications a few years ago to determine if we could omit some mechanical use in fallow," said Broussard. "That's when we realized the application had some activity on bermudagrass. With spot applications of Roundup on escapes, we can basically omit mechanical tillage in fallow. This can save time and money and help conserve moisture for planting by not opening up the row before it's time to plant."

Growers will see the best results with K-4™ when they have a good clod-free seedbed, make the application right behind planting, and get adequate moisture within 21 days.

Sandy soil and bermudagrass are two of the problems Levert often battles as a sugarcane farmer in Louisiana, and traditionally he used Prowl herbicide in his plant cane. "In testing the K-4™ formulation, K-4™ is easier to use than Prowl," he said. "It's not yellow, doesn't stain

your clothes and it works a lot better because it does a better job suppressing bermudagrass, whe Prowl doesn't do anything."

Also, Levert is impressed by the excellent residual control the treatment exhibits on broadle weeds and grasses. "Prowl needs rain to be incorporated in the soil as does Velpar® plus Karmex (K-4™), but it seems to wait on moisture longer than Prowl," he said.

"K-4™ should be a real good product. You will see more people go for it because it works a l better, and it's easier to handle. It has no smell, and it doesn't turn everything yellow."

Andre Blanchard and his father also farm sugarcane in St. Martin Parish. Al Broussard introduce Blanchard to the tank mix of Velpar® plus Karmex® (K-4™) for suppression of bermudagrass o his plant cane in 2001.

"I'm the type of fellow that doesn't mind trying new things once, but I want to see it first hand i my own field, not on someone else's," Blanchard said. "In the plant cane crop of 2001, I had th field that was heavily infested with bermudagrass. We had a rainy fallow season and we couldn apply Roundup like we wanted. So every chance we got, we'd work it mechanically, which is not good practice with bermudagrass because all you do is transplant it if you get moisture soon aft tillage."

"Al Broussard had seen good results suppressing bermudagrass from Velpar® plus Karmex (K-4™) in some fallow fields, so he recommended we try it on this field with the bermudagra pressure. We were in the middle of planting, so I sent one of our laborers to apply Velpar® at quart per acre plus Karmex® at 2.25 pounds per acre.

"He accidentally missed two rows. Those rows were full of bermudagrass and everything els The Velpar® plus Karmex® (K-4™) had suppressed the bermudagrass big time.

"Our primary plant cane preemerge products were Prowl plus Sencor. We experimented wi the K-4™ formulation last year at planting and really liked it. No triple rinsing, no staining o clothes, trucks and equipment, and compared to Prowl plus Sencor, DuPont™ K-4™ is mo economical."

Steps to Follow for Suppression of Bermudagrass

For suppression of bermudagrass in fallow sugarcane fields, apply DuPont™ K-4™ at 4 pound per acre to a newly prepared seedbed that is free of clods and existing vegetation. If weeds a present at application, either a separate application of a contact herbicide or a tank mix partner recommended for improved postemergence control. Make fallow applications at least 60 days pri to sugarcane planting.

An application of a contact herbicide may be needed to maintain suppression of bermudagra prior to planting.

Apply K-4™ at 4 pounds per acre broadcast immediately following planting and row packing to maintain bermudagrass suppression.

# # #

Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mi applications.

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(continued from page 18)

Martin & Poche

Top 20 Producer
5th Place

1st Place District
Acreage Winner
River/Bayou
Lafourche District
Category III

Chad Leblanc, Keith Martin, Wayne Poche, Kolby Martin

• • • • • • • • •

Randall Rivere Farm, Inc. (No Photo Available)

Top 20 Producer - 6th Place **Parish Winner - Iberville**

• • • • • • • • •

A & B Farms

Top 20 Producer
7th Place

2nd Place District
Acreage Winner
River/Bayou
Lafourche District
Category II

Andrew Medine, Michael Duet Iberville County Agent, and Brian Medine

Triple K & M Farms, Inc.

Top 20 Producer
8th Place

2nd Place District
Acreage Winner -
River/Bayou
Lafourche District
Category I

Parish Winner - Terrebonne

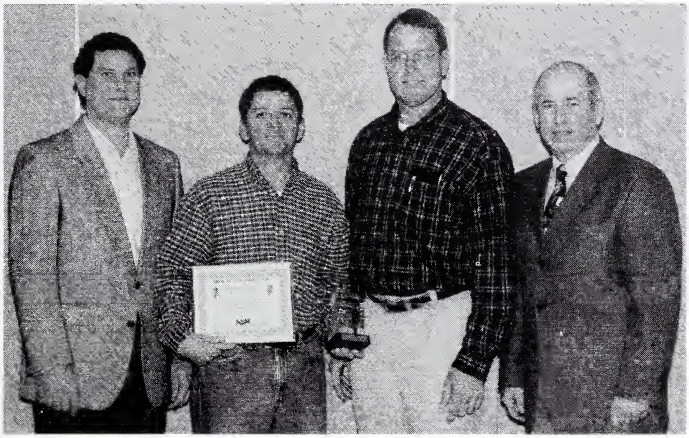
Herman Waguespack, Jr. League Agronomist; Ronnie Waguespack; Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Blanchard Farms, Inc.

Top 20 Producer
9th Place

Parish Winner -
Assumption

Herman Waguespack, Jr., League Agronomist; Meinrad, Mr. Al, Gene and Dave Blanchard; Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service



Keith Zeringue

Top 20 Producer
10th Place

Parish Winner -
Lafourche

Herman Waguespack, Jr. League Agronomist; Keith Zeringue; Mike Hebert, Lafourche County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

SJM Farms, Inc.

Top 20 Producer
11th Place

Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent, Joe and Shane Michel

T.J. Sanchez & Son, Inc.

Top 20 Producer
12th Place

David Sanchez and Michael Duet, Iberville County Agent

Landry Farms

Top 20 Producer
13th Place

Herman Waguespack, Jr. League Agronomist; Joel Landry; Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Riverland Farms

Top 20 Producer
14th Place

Parish Winner -
St. John

Herman Waguespack, Jr. League Agronomist; Leslie Rodrigue; Rene Schmidt, St. John County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

(continued on page 26)

THE BEST JUST GOT BETTER!

Case IH Austoft is continuously improving the world's best cane harvester by incorporating numerous innovations that you can only expect from the world leader. The latest 7000 series cane harvesters are unbeatable and give you the highest productivity while reducing your harvesting costs.

NEW CLEANING SYSTEM
- Anti vortex fan and duraliner
- Best cleaning and reduced cane loss
- Increased component life

BACKHOE TYPE ELEVATOR SLEW
- Rugged
- Hydraulic cushioning in cylinders
- Lower maintenance

SWING-OUT RADIATOR
- Faster service
- Reduced maintenance time

CABIN
- Tilts 60 degrees for improved engine access
- Quietest cabin in industry with 2 doors
- Greatest productivity and comfort

WIDE FRONT
- Excellent in conventional and dual row cane
- Improved feeding and lower cane loss

HYDRAULIC KNOCK DOWN ROLLER (OPTIONAL)
- Adjustable from cabin
- Improved feeding in variety of conditions

SIMPLIFIED HYDRAULIC SYSTEM
- Lower running pressures
- Efficient system with less HP used
- Reduced maintenance time

AUSTOFT

CASE IH

Advanced solutions. Case IH solutions

(continued from page 24)

LeJeune Brothers

Top 20 Producer
15th Place

1st Place District
Acreage Winner
Teche District
Category II

Parish Winner - Iberia

Brian, Jr. and Ricky LeJeune; Windell Jackson, League Agronomist; Joe LeJeune, Jimmy Flannigan, Iberia County Agent; B.J. LeJeune; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Naquin Brothers, Inc.

Top 20 Producer
16th Place

Herman Waguespack, Jr. League Agronomist; Gerald, Craig, and Mark Naquin; Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Glynn Rivet

Top 20 Producer
17th Place

Herman Waguespack, Jr. League Agronomist; Clint, Glynn, and Brent Rivet; Michael Duet, Iberville County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

(MORE PHOTOS IN THE NEXT ISSUE)

CLASSIFIEDS - FOR SALE

1992 Cameco S30 Single-row Harvester, cab & air, a/c, Front wheel pull, double scroll, extended gate 4 on 1, CAT engine. Call Joe Davis at (337) 276-4547 day or night or (337) 276-4778 evenings or (337) 519-2268 mobile.

1997 Austoft 770 Sugarcane Harvester, Cummins engine, with high dump wagons; 4 Used 8/9 ton hydraulic high dump sugar cane wagons with walking beam axles and 18.4 x 30 wheels, good condition, $13,000 each. For information call Bill Fagg at (337) 302-4430 or (337) 734-4558. After hours call (337) 893-6001.

Reynolds 14C Scraper. Repinned, bushed, and painted in 2001 - $12,500. Call John Gay at (225) 687-3683 office or (225) 776-2241 cell.

Int'l 4-wheel drive Tractor with 3 pt. hitch, 466 Turbo engine, A/C in very good conditionn, field ready - $8.000; **Int'l 500 disc 12ft. 24" blade** cyl. & hoses $500; **1985 Int'l Diesel Truck 18 wheeler** & 40 ft. grain trailer with new tarp, good condition - $8,000; **1-row Rotovator** 3pt. hitch - $200; **Int'l 856 Tractor Low-Clearance** in good condition - $5,000. Call Allen Oubre, Sr. at (337) 394-4146 or on cell at (337) 224-2952.

1999 Cameco CHT 2500 cane combine. Has a new tract job and new elevator chain with less than 50 hours. Has Louviere front end with live scroll. Has been well taken care of by one owner. Asking $125,000. Call Bret or David Allain at (337) 319-0676 or (337) 319-0677 or (337) 276-5503 office.

8 Quality Trailers 48' Call Travis Knott at (337) 230-1416 mobile or (888) 538-1751 pager.

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2. **There will be a 10 item limit with only farm equipment listed.**

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Volume 81, No. 9 June 2003

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Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

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of the

AMERICAN SUGAR CANE LEAGUE OF THE U.S.A., INC.

Wednesday, June 18, 2003

9:00 a.m.

Howard Johnson Lodge
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Thibodaux, Louisiana

(See page 12 for details)

The Sugar Bulletin

The Official Organ of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

Disaster Assistance
Excess Weights

Since early February, your League leadership has been wrestling with the matter of getting federal disaster assistance to affected parties in the cane industry. Several meetings were held by the League, with the final meeting taking place in Port Allen on April 29 and attended by more than 150 members from the various cane growing areas.

During the months preceeding the meeting in Port Allen, a working committee of the League met telephonically at least once a week, and on many weeks, more. The working committee's assignment was to hash through what could be done, what couldn't be done (allowed by law or government rules and regulation), how many benefitted, how few benefitted, was the money going to get to those that were truly in need, were we meeting the wishes of Congress that was understanding of our situation, and many other pertinent concerns. Important issues such as weather conditions in previous years, state average yield's verses individual farmer's yields, how to compare the 2002 loss for delivery purpose, and last but not least, how to bring such proposals to the membership to assure that the membership has the final say on what it thinks is fair.

To that end, I feel that your League did the best job possible. From the beginning, I told the working committee to be prepared, because no matter what the final outcome was, no matter how open the process, no matter how deliberative on all the issus the League may have been, there would always be some in the industry that weren't happy. Well, the truth of the matter is that it appears that the majority of the industry, and those observing the process, is in agreement with the outcome. And, as usual, some are not satisfied, for one or another reason. But, as in any democracy, the majority rules. Additionally, on the whole, the Louisiana sugar industry's biggest strength has been its ability to "internally" wrestle each issue, have deep and meaningful debate, vote the issue up or down, and then walk out united. To maintain that tradition and policy is as important in this day and time, just as it has been in the past.

To that point, I would like to note there were some people, during the process, that began contacting members of Congress about their disagreement with what the League was doing. Some individuals even called state legislators who had no jurisdiction. I guess I should be glad that Police Jurors and School Board members weren't also contacted! Somewhere along the line in the process, someone determined that they knew exactly what the working committee was planning to recommend to the membership and then the rumors and misinformation began to run rampant. And, erroneous information and the washing of one's laundry outside of the house are what "will" cause problems for this industry.

Everyone has their personal rights, and I fully realize that, maybe more than others. But, the strength of this industry is not to put our Congressional delegation or other supporters outside of our industry in a position of choosing between one growing area over another, growers over mills and vice versa, one grower over another grower, one mill over another mill. That is when you will conpromise yourself and your industry. It is simple human nature for anyone, elected officials or otherwise, not to want to get between parties and take sides on matters that can and should be worked out internally. That is simple human nature and carries over into the political realm. So, in the future I ask that "everyone" adhere to that tradition, policy and wisdom that has been handed down to this industry by our forefathers; work out the isses "internally." When the majority decides on the issue, we move forward, **united.** To do otherwise is not in your, or your industry's best interest. As I have said many times before, please, just think about it.

The League has sent out to the membership the proposal that was eventually approved by the entire Disaster Assistance Task Force and the League's Board. It was one of some five or six methods of delivery that were proposed to the working committee during the three month process. After some three hours of intensive debate and discussion on all of the proposals, what was known at that meeting as option number four, a Graduated Payment Proposal, was agreed to be the proposal to suggest to the USDA officials. The Board of the League voted unanimously to support this measure.

There is still some clean up work that was being done by the USDA-FSA on data received at this writing (May 12), but it is hoped that before you read this article that growers in this state will know approximately how much disaster assistance he or she may be eligible to receive. USDA and the League are hopeful that you will have that information soon and that the proceeds might be delivered by mid summer.

Excess Weights

I have been in Baton Rouge on several occasions during this legislative session working on passage of the Excess Weight legislation. Both bills, the Scale Lockout legislation and the Extra Axle bill are both proceeding quickly through the process. Your League and this industry have been complemented many times during the committee hearings and floor debate on this legislation. Representatives, Senators, Commissioner Odom, LaDOTD, State Police, opponents of special permits and others have all commended this industry for recognizing the problem and addressing it for them, rather than them having to be forced to do something "to" you. Members were thankful for several reasons. One expressed the pleasure of not receiving phone calls all the time wanting assistance with overweight tickets. You know, the one's that were neither the farmer or haulers fault! Some expressed the concern with damage to certain roads in their districts, and throughout the state's cane growing area, and also feel that what we are doing will, in the future, remedy some of these problems. They commended the industry about the reduced amount of debris on the roads. They also expressed relief that our trucks would self comply in the near future, and generally felt good about what you are doing in this regard as an industry. For that, I commend you for your recognition of the problem and addressing it before someone made you. It is hoped that the bills will be up for final passage by the end of May. In the meantime, I believe we will be able to continue to haul at 100,000 pounds GVW far into the future. Please don't abuse this privilege as this industry has shown it wants to be a good citizen.

The next step is on the Federal level, to assure that we can maintain the 100,000 pounds GVW on I-10 and I-49, especially as US 90 is converted to Interstate status south of Lafayette. I have begun the process of working with Congressman Richard Baker, who is a member of the US House Transporation Committee, on continuing the allowance for cane trucks on interstate highways in this state. I would like to thank the people of this industry that came together to hammer out recommendations for this legislation. Thank you also for recognizing and addressing the issue. The entire industry will be better off in the long run.

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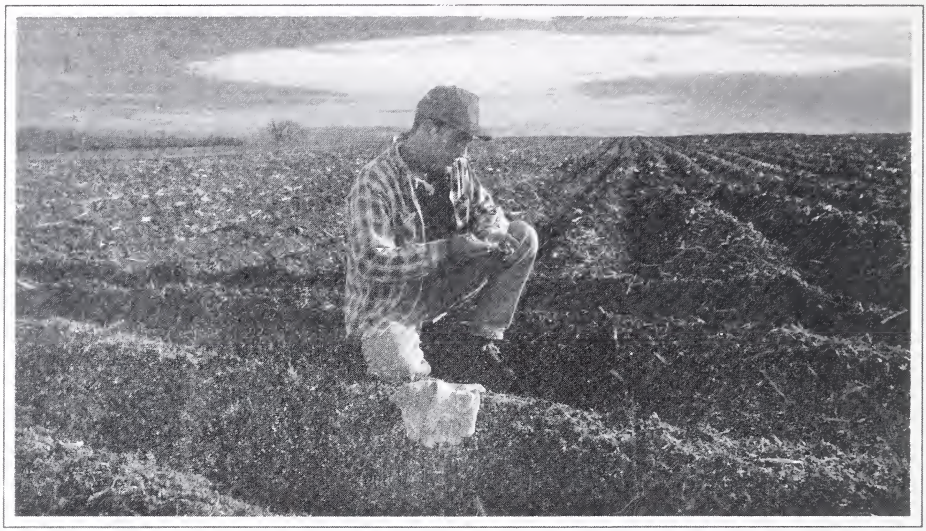

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Congress Awaiting Breakout of Budget Allocations
ASA Mission To Geneva
Sweetener Caucus Leaders Meet With Administration Re: Sugar Talks
USDA Increases Markeing Allotments
USDA Announces New ATAC Members
USDA WASDE May Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

At the time of this writing, House and Senate appropriators were awaiting the 302 budget allocations from the budget committees. While the President's budget request assumed a 5 percent increase in overall spending from FY03, the budget resolutions released in April set lower spending targets and the most recent signs indicate that agriculture spending could see only a $100 million increase over the FY03 baseline. This would be an increase of just over one-half of a percent (0.5%) of the $17 billion baseline.

One reason for the delay in issuing the 302 allocation numbers to the appropriators is that the House leadership has taken a more aggressive role in setting the 302 allocation levels this year. Once appropriators receive the allocations, the agriculture appropriations subcommittee staff will likely require approximately 3 weeks to draft the bill. This timeline should result in subcommittee markups beginning in mid- to late-June.

ASA Mission To Geneva

I participated in a trade mission to Geneva in early May along with other Washington representatives and ASA trade and economic experts. The purpose was to gain a better understanding of the status of WTO negotiations while sharing the views of US sugar producers and processors with key US negotiators and potential allies.

The clearest message we received was that progress on agricultural negotiations hinges on the ability of the European Union to agree on modifications to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The EU is undertaking a "midterm review" of the CAP this summer in hopes of jump-starting negotiations ahead of the Cancun ministerial in September of 2003. If progress is not made on CAP reform, the WTO negotiations could be pushed back until 2006-07.

Sugar is not a part of the upcoming CAP review but major reform of EU sugar policy is seen as inevitable after the current policy ends in 2006. The Everything But Arms initiative, providing free access to the EU for the 49 least developed countries (30 of whom produce sugar) is another challenge facing the EU, as is the free access afforded the Balkans as a part of post-war development aid. Further, the WTO case brought by Brazil, Australia and Thailand attacks EU C-sugar exports and re-export of ACP imports as export subsidies. This case will bear watching.

The issue of special and differential treatment for developing countries received much attention during our visits, with WTO officials indicating that something must be done to recognize different

levels of development. US officials have stressed the need to consider 'graduation,' perhaps based on per capita GNP, and 'differentiation' based on the level of competitiveness for a product.

The trade team met with representatives from Taiwan, Mexico, Australia, Guatemala, the Caribbean countries, and the EU sugar industry.

Sweetener Caucus Leaders Meet With Administration - Re: Sugar Talks

Senator Craig met with USTR Ag Negotiator Allen Johnson and USDA Undersecretary J B Penn in mid-May to receive an update on sweetener talks in the various trade negotiations. Senator John Breaux was unable to attend because of the death of former Senator Russell Long, but Johnny Broussard attended the meeting on his behalf.

Ambassador Johnson led the discussions. On the WTO front, Johnson noted that the EU's ability to take dramatic steps on CAP reform was the main focus of negotiators at the moment. On FTAA's and our request that sugar negotiations be removed from the table until the WTO can address the issue, Johnson reiterated the Administration's position, laid out in a recent reply to Senators Craig and Breaux, that everything should stay on the table. However, Johnson stressed that the negotiators will not move in a direction that US commodity groups find unacceptable.

On Mexico, Johnson noted that the upcoming elections and the continuing confusion over Minister Derbez's ability to maintain the trade portfolio and the finance ministry's portfolio have resulted in delays from the Mexican side. Johnson stressed that the US will continue to press for progress despite the elections. Tier II and the 2008 elimination of tariffs continue to be the main sticking points, along with the soda tax. The Administration officials noted that no announcement had been made regarding the TRQ levels for this year, beyond the WTO-required access. While this is due in part to the declining supplies in Mexico, there was an implied linkage of the lack of TRQ announcements with the lack of progress in negotiations.

ASA's Jack Roney testified on May 20 at a Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee hearing on the future of US economic relations with the Western Hemisphere. Roney's remarks will affirm ASA's concerns with the Administration's intentions to keep sugar on the table in FTAA and bilateral negotiations.

USDA Increases Marketing Allotments

In mid-May, USDA announced an increase in the overall allotment quantity (OAQ) for domestic sugar by 463,000 tons, raising the total to 8.633 million tons for the 2002 beet and cane sugar crops. The change reflects the 20,000 ton decrease in anticipated cane sugar production and the 235,000 ton increase in beet sugar production (see WASDE discussion below) and allows processors to bring an additional 202,000 short tons raw value (STRV) of cane sugar stocks and 77,000 STRV of beet sugar stocks to the market. Announcements of individual state cane allotments are expected in the coming days.

USDA Announces New ATAC Members

In early May, USDA released the list of new Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Sweeteners and Sweetener Products (ATAC) members for the next two years as representatives of the Louisiana industry. The ATAC membership is as follows:

Margaret O. Blamberg
American Cane Sugar Refiners' Association
Van R. Boyette
Okeelanta Corporation
Sarah A. Catala
United States Sugar Corporation
Otto A. "Al" Christopherson
Christopherson Farms
Thomas C. Earley
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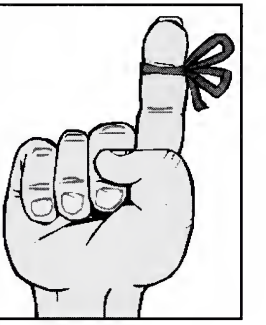
Donald M. Phillips, Jr.
American Sugar Alliance
Kevin S. Price
American Crystal Sugar Company
John C. "Jack" Roney
American Sugar Alliance
David H. Stafford
Grocery Manufacturers of America
Charles L. Thibaut
Evan Hall Sugar Co-op., Inc.
Linda K. Thrasher
Cargill, Inc.
Donald L. Wallace, Jr.
American Sugar Cane League
Dalton Yancey
Florida Sugar Cane League, Inc.

Luther Markwart of the American Sugarbeet Growers Association was named to the Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC). The APAC provides advice on overall policy objectives regarding agricultural trade issues. The ATACs offer more detailed technical advice and information on specific commodities.

USDA WASDE May Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its May World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was increased to 8,450,000 short tons (raw value) from 8,185,000 in April. Beet production was increased to 4,450,000short tons from 4,215,000 in April, while cane production was dropped 20,000 to 3,950,000 tons due to a drop in Florida. Louisiana cane sugar production for 2002/03 remained at 1,360,000 short tons, while the 2003/04 projection was at 1,600,000 short tons. The 2002/03 estimate of total imports was increased to 1,665,000 short tons from 1,605,000, with imports under TRQ increased by 20,000 to 1,265,000 and imports under re-export rising 40,000 to 340,000. This drove total supply to 11,346,000 from 11,062,000 in April. 2002/03 exports were seen rising to 155,000 from 125,000 last month, but ending stocks were increased to 1,601,000 from 1,337,000. This resulted in an ending stocks-to-use ratio of 16.4 percent versus 13.7 percent in April.

The final 2001/02 numbers were little changed from last month, with the stocks to use ratio ending at 12.4 percent, up slightly from 12.3 percent in April. New 2003/04 projections were released, with production projected at 8,595,000 short tons. Beet production is projected at 4,450,00, cane production at 4,145,000 short tons. Imports are seen at 1,606,000 short tons, bringing total supply to 11,902,000. Exports and domestic uses are seen totaling 10,200,000, leaving ending stocks at 1,602,000 and resulting in a stocks-to-use ratio of 15.7 percent.



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June 18, 2003

Annual Contact Committee Meeting

(see page 12 for details)

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report - New Variety Release
Contact Committee Meeting
Sugarcane Meetings and Field Days
American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists

As expected, with warming night and daytime temperatures, the stands of cane have improved greatly. On May 13, 2003, as one rides the fields and discusses the upcoming crop with growers, most are expecting to produce a good average crop. Of course, there are some growers that are not of the opinion that they will have a good crop. Despite being treated with Polado, and then not being harvested until well past the date they should have been harvested, many fields have very good stands and are starting to grow well. Some fields of plant cane and stubble are so advanced that if the rains should delay fieldwork for about two weeks, growers will be unable to get back into to them to do final cultivations. The cane has reached the fertilizer and has greened up. At this early date, rows that were not fertilized are very easy to see.

Many growers are concerned that the cane is shorter than normal. Looking at the growth measurements taken at USDA, Ardoyne Farm in Houma, LA, cane height is one of the shortest of the last five years. Height at this time of the year really does not have too large of an effect on the yield potential of the crop. **Population is the key factor to producing high tonnage.** Many of the stands that appear to have low populations are just now starting to tiller out. Upon close observation, there are still many primary shoots starting to show themselves (especially in sandy soil).

Stands appear to be greatly affected by the date of harvest. Many fields that were harvested before mid-harvest and which were treated with Polado are very slow to show re-growth. Much of the acreage that was either not planted or that has poor stands due to damage during harvest, is being replaced with older stubble fields that have good stands. Keep in mind that for older stubble fields to produce a good crop there needs to be adequate rain fall. At this time, field conditions are starting to get very dusty and a number of growers are starting to wonder when they will get rain. Even though it is somewhat dry at this time, the weather has been 'just what the doctor ordered.' Badly rutted fields have been well worked and the ruts have been filled in. Growers were not anticipating results as good as they are getting. Additionally, dry weather at this time of the year seems to help insure the survivability of late emerging shoots.

New Variety Release

The Variety Release Committee, which is made up of breeding research personnel from LSU, USDA, and ASCL met on April 10, 2003. Chaired by Dan Duplantis, Sr., the committee voted to release the new variety HoCP 96-540 to the cane growers of Louisiana for commercial production. In replicated yield tests, HoCP 96-540 has yielded significantly more sugar per acre than LCP 85-384 in plant cane and stubble crops. More information on the variety can be found in

this issue (page 14) of the Bulletin in the "Notice of Release of Sugarcane Variety HoCP 96-540." The variety has been increased on the American Sugar Cane League secondary stations and will be available for distribution this fall. A complete list of stations where HoCP 96-540 is available, an application form for seed of the new variety, and cost of the seed will be published in the July issue of *The Sugar Bulletin.*

Contact Committee Meeting

As mentioned in the March 2003 issue of *The Sugar Bulletin*, the date for the Contact Committee Meeting has been set for June 18, 2003. The meeting will be held at the Howard Johnson Lodge in Thibodaux, LA. Chairman Lawrence 'Boo' Levert will call the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and the meeting should last until noon. The first section of the program will center on the variety program. Information regarding the yield potential and other characteristics of the new variety HoCP 96-540 will be discussed, as well as changes to the breeding program at the LSU Sugar Station and changes made to improve and insure the quality of seed cane coming from secondary stations.

Each year more and more of the industry are turning to billet planting. In the fall of 2002, because of the lodged conditions of the crop, and because of a planting that dragged into harvest, some growers were forced to plant more acreage with billets than was planned. The wet-cold conditions of this past winter were considered an acid test of the survivability of billet planting. Dr. Jeff Hoy will update the results of the 2002 planting season and his evaluation of billet planted fields. He will also discuss what steps, if any, are being taken in the early stages of the breeding program to select for billet-planted cane's survivability.

There have been many discussions among growers, processors, and researchers about methods of encouraging the delivery of higher quality cane to the mill. We all know that there must be some way to encourage the higher quality deliveries that are needed if this industry is to remain viable. As of yet there have been no solutions devised that are satisfactory to all. Both growers and millers agree that if the industry was growing a more erect variety, there would certainly be less trash delivered to the mill. Once the industry starts to increase the newly released variety and the new variety=s yield potential is proven, under normal field conditions, there will be some decrease in the amount of trash delivered to the mill. HoCP 96-540 does lodge, but not nearly as badly as LCP 85-384. It also picks itself up somewhat. This brings us to the next topic to be discussed at the Contact Committee Meeting, which is the improvement to combine harvesters and their effect on cane quality. Also, to be discussed is the potential of a new cane and trash separation method. The method uses the differences in the specific gravity of cane billets, mud, and other trash as a means to separate them. The use of specific gravity for separation is used by other industries to partition many different types of materials

Because of the low sugar yields for the 2002 crop, production controls were not implemented. As the crop continues to improve, and with the possibility of production controls looming over their heads, many growers are questioning what actions they should take. Should money and effort be spent in planting marginal fields? Hopefully by the time of the Contact Committee Meeting there will be more guidelines, and there can be a good discussion on what decisions should be made.

Sugarcane Meetings and Field Days

The following dates and times of up-coming sugarcane meeting were provided by Benjamin L. Legendre, PhD., Sugarcane Specialist and Professor LSU AgCenter. Dr. Legendre indicates that the times shown are the times at which the meetings are scheduled to begin and that registration starts about one hour before.

June 6 - 9:00 AM **Terrebonne Parish Area Sugarcane Field Day**
Ardoyne Farm,USDA-ARS, SRRC
Sugarcane Research Unit
Chacahoula, LA

June 18 - 9:00 AM **ASCL Contact Committee Meeting,**
Howard Johnson Inn
Thibodaux, LA

June 25 - 27 **33rd Annual Joint Meeting of the Florida and Louisiana Divisions ASSCT**
Hilton Sandestin Beach
Destin, FL

July 10 - 13 **Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation Convention**
Mariott Hotel
New Orleans, LA

July 16 - 9:00 AM **LSU Area Sugarcane Field Day**
(Iberville, Pointe Coupee,St. Charles, St. John (Host), West Baton Rouge)
Sugar Research Station
St. Gabriel, LA

July 17 - 8:30 AM **Lafourche Parish Sugarcane Field Day**
American Legion Home
Raceland, LA

July 18 - 4:30 PM **St. Mary Parish Sugarcane Field Day**
American Legion Hall
Franklin, LA

July 22 - 2:00 PM **Assumption Parish Sugarcane Tour and Field Day**
New Extension Office
Napoleonville, LA

July 23 - 3:00 PM **Vermilion Parish Sugarcane Summer School,**
Charles Guidry Farm
Erath, LA

July 24 - 4:30 PM **Iberia Parish Sugarcane Field Day**
M.A. Patout & Sons
Patoutville, LA

July 25 - 2:00 PM **St. Martin/Lafayette/ St. Landry Parishes Sugarcane Field Day**
Levert-St. John
St. Martinville, LA

TBA **Avoyelles/Rapides Parish Sugarcane Field Day**

Growers are reminded that they should make every attempt to attend the field day that is scheduled for their own parish. There are always some new bits of information and thoughts presented at the field days. Furthermore, if you have an opportunity to visit the sugar research stations please do so. Researchers there work on projects that help you, as a cane grower, improve yields and decrease costs. They, the researchers, are always appreciative of an opportunity to show off their work. A tour of one of the sugar stations will give a grower or mill person a better understanding of the large amount of support research that goes into the breeding program and the many other fields of research that are needed to maintain production at a maximum, with the minimum amount of input.

American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists

Members of ASSCT are reminded that the 33rd Annual Joint Meeting of the Florida and Louisiana Divisions of the ASSCT will be held June 25 27, 2003 at the Hilton Sandestin Beach, Destin, Florida. During the two days of presentations, there are a number of pertinent papers being offered in both the Agricultural Sections and the Manufacturing Sections. Beginning at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 26th, the exhibit officially sponsored by the ASSCT will be on display. The display can be found in the Exhibit Hall in the Emerald Ballroom. Please make an effort to visit the exhibit.

Further information about the meetings can be obtained by contacting Dr. Denver Loupe at the LSU phone number of (225) 578-6930. Additional information about the meeting can also be obtained from the ASSCT web site at www.assct.org . Information about the hotel can be found at www.sandestinbeachhilton.com.

Because the State Legislature is still in session, The Baton Rouge Line will appear next month.

Notice of Release of Sugarcane Variety HoCP 96-540

United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Research Service
Washington, D.C. 20250

And

Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803

And

American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.
Thibodaux, Louisiana 70301

The Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, The Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station of the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, and the American Sugarcane League of the U.S.A., Inc., working cooperatively to develop improved sugarcane cultivars, have jointly developed and hereby announce the release of a new cultivar, HoCP 96-540, for commercial planting in the summer of 2003.

HoCP 96-540 is a product of the cross LCP 86-454 x LCP 85-384 made at Canal Point (CP) Florida in 1991 and selected at Houma (Ho), Louisiana, in 1993. The cultivar has a high population of medium-sized stalks that turn amber when exposed to sunlight. Its stalk number is 90% and weight is 125% of Louisiana's principal cultivar, LCP 85-384, averaged over plant, first-ratoon and second-ratoon crops. Similar to LCP 85-384, HoCP 96-540 is an exceptionally good ratooning variety.

Yield data from a total of 58 mechanically harvested, replicated yield trials on both light- and heavy textured soils indicate that HoCP 96-540 consistently produces 10-15% greater total recoverable cane and sugar per hectare than LCP 85-384 in plant, first-ratoon and second-ratoon crops. HoCP 96-540 is a mid-maturing high sucrose cultivar that produces levels of recoverable sugar per ton of cane and fiber content comparable to those of LCP 85-384. Field observations suggest that stalks of HoCP 96-540 are more erect and less brittle than LCP 85-384. In addition, leaf sheaths may be less tightly adhered to the stalks. These characteristics should minimize yield losses associated with whole stalk and combine harvesting.

HoCP 96-540 is resistant to sugarcane mosaic virus (strains A, B, and D) and sorghum mosaic virus (strains H, I, and M). The cultivar is resistant to smut (Ustilago scitaminea Sydow) rust (Puccinia melanocephala H. And P. Syd.) and leaf scald [Xanthomonas albilineans (Ashby) Dowson] diseases under natural field infection conditions. Similar to essentially all sugarcane cultivars released in Louisiana, HoCP 96-540 may sustain significant reductions in yields of total recoverable sugar and cane in ratoon crops from ratoon stunting disease (Clavibacter xyli subsp. xyli). It is essential that seed cane of this cultivar be free or nearly free of this disease in order for it to yield to its fullest potential. Based on field observations where it has been increased, HoCP 96-540 is not any more susceptible to the sugarcane yellowleaf virus than current commercially grown cultivars. Field observations also suggest that HoCP 96-540 is not any more susceptible to herbicides commonly used for the control of problematic weeds than LCP 85-384. HoCP 96-540 is susceptible

to the sugarcane borer [Diatraea saccharalis (Fabricius)] and should not be grown in areas where insecticides cannot be applied.

Based on maturity, cold tolerance, and ripener studies conducted thus far, HoCP 96-540's maturity curve, cold tolerance profile, and response to Polado are similar to those of LCP 85-384.

Cultivar HoCP 96-540 produces the following microsatellite fingerprints that can be used for identification purposes: two alleles of SMC334BS (145 and 162 base pairs (bp) in size), four alleles of SMC336BS (166, 169, 171, 177 bp), six alleles of MCSA068G08 (177, 180, 183, 186, 188, 194 bp), four alleles of SMC286CS (129, 132, 135, 144 bp), four alleles of SMC713BS (119, 357, 360, 369 bp), three alleles of MCSA053C10 (143, 147, 150 bp), five alleles of MCSA042E08 (123, 135, 151, 155, 197 bp), four alleles of mSSCIR5 (145, 168, 373, 378 bp), and three alleles of mSSCIR33 (320, 326, 335 bp).

Seed cane of HoCP 96-540 will be distributed by the American Sugarcane League of the U.S.A., Inc., in accordance with procedures to be announced to all sugarcane growers in Louisiana on or after July 1, 2003. Inquiries concerning seed cane should be directed to the American Sugarcane League, 206 East Bayou Road, Thibodaux, LA 70301. Neither the United States Department of Agriculture nor the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station has seed cane available for distribution.

Dr. Edward B. Knipling
Administrator, USDA Agricultural Research Service

Dr. William H. Brown
Director, LSU Ag Center, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station

Mr. John Gay
Chairman of the Board, American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.

Summary of results comparing the yield of HoCP 96-540 with LCP 85-384, HoCP 85-845, and HoCP 91-555 in 49 mechanically-harvested, replicated trials on light- and heavy-textured soils from 2000 to 2002.

Variety	Cane Yield per Acre (tons)	Sugar per Ton (lbs)	Sugar per Acre (lbs)
		Plant-cane crop (26)[1]	
LCP 85-384	30.0 -	260	7819 -
HoCP 85-845	29.4 -	245 -	7177 -
HoCP 91-555	30.6 -	257	7871 -
HoCP 96-540	**34.8**	**261**	**9097**
		First-ratoon crop (16)[1]	
LCP 85-384	28.2 -	268	7544 -
HoCP 85-845	25.7 -	260	6663 -
HoCP 91-555	26.6 -	274 +	7291 -
HoCP 96-540	**31.7**	**263**	**8285**
		Second-ratoon crop (7)[1]	
LCP 85-384	29..3 -	257	7438 -
HoCP 85-845	27.0 -	259	6952 -
HoCP 91-555	27.0 -	270 +	7205 -
HoCP 96-540	**33.6**	**256**	**8528**

[1] *Number in parenthesis represents total number of trials.*
+ or - denotes significantly, higher or lower, respectively, than HoCP 96-540, using PROC MIXED procedure in SAS (ver. 8.02)

The Application for HoCP 96-540, along with the list of Secondary Stations where the seedcane can be picked up, will appear in the next issue of The Sugar Bulletin.

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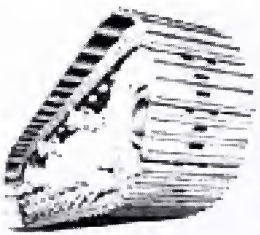

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ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Water Pollution Control Policy Reorientation

A frequent subject of this column over the last five years has been "TMDL" or Total Maximum Daily Loads. These are a Federally mandated regulatory device intended (originally) to aid regulatory agencies in allocating maximum allowable levels of pollutant discharge that are consistent with maintaining appropriate stream water quality standards. TMDL's evolved from the basin-by-basin water quality management planning process called for in Section 208 of the 1972 Water Pollution Control Act. As originally developed, TMDLs were applicable only to "point" sources of pollution such as factories, municipalities and institutions, and was then a useful, mostly non-controversial regulatory tool. Unfortunately, the stream water quality standards for many of the nation's streams were, and still are, set at levels that cannot be attained even if watersheds were restored to "natural" conditions. And thus, these standards are not universally achieved 31 years after achievement was mandated by Federal Law. Environmentalists vehemently oppose any effort to adjust stream standards, insisting rather that all sources of pollution be stopped altogether even if ridiculous standards cannot be met by drastic TMDL enforcement action.

Agricultural interest in TMDL peaked when in July of 2000, the Clinton EPA Administration promulgated a highly controversial TMDL rule that required unprecedented enforcement of TMDLs on "non-point" sources of water pollution including agriculture and silviculture. That rule went into effect in spite of Congress's objection and denial of appropriation to fund implementation of the rule. The incoming Bush Administration suspended the rule pending completion of a study by the National Research Council, but lawsuits by environmentalists forced states to proceed with implementing Clinton's rule. In January 2003, EPA announced that the Clinton TMDL rule was "unworkable" and is being withdrawn. Concurrently, EPA announced that it was establishing a "Watershed Management Council" to assist it in developing water policy to orient on watersheds (rather than an individual stream segments as does TMDL). This EPA action, along with a favorable court ruling in one of the environmentalists lawsuits, effectively guts the environmentalist strategy intended to control who may and may not farm, and how.

When the current EPA Administration does finally promulgate the expected "Watershed Rule," TMDL will not just disappear. Some TMDLs have already been adopted for Louisiana streams and many others are scheduled for promulgation in the next few years. Remember that LDEQ water permit fees were increased in 1999 by a whopping $1,728,000 annually to augment ongoing TMDL work, and all DEQ fees were increased another seven percent in 2001 and 15 percent in 2002 across the board so TMDL work continues. However, TMDL now reverts to the same significance that it had prior to the devious TMDL initiative of the Clinton Administration. However, TMDL is no longer the lethal weapon that environmentalists planned to use against perceived enemies-farmers and foresters. While TMDL now drops from this columns "viewscreen," it is imperative that attention be given to the developing "Watershed Rule."

There will undoubtedly be an effort by environmentalists to sabotage any action that does not fully support their unreasonable objectives.

It cannot be said that common sense alone lead EPA to conclude that the Clinton TMDL rule was unworkable. A June 2001 USEPA report estimated that states would need 15 years of work and $4.3 billion annually to support the monumental effort. With the current Federal budget deficit and uncertain national defense requirements, and budget deficits in nearly every state, where is the money for pie-in-the-sky environmental programs to come from? One can expect the inevitable, that LDEQ will surely ask for yet another raise in fees (taxes), but Federal funds for environmental boondoggles are now simply not available (and thank goodness for that).

Farm Auction
Melvin Hebert Farms
Saturday, June 21, 2003
10:00 a.m.
Garden City, LA

LOCATION: U.S. Hwy. 90 South of Franklin, take Garden City exit, to Hwy. 182, turn right to Auction. This is a complete sellout.

TRACTORS: JD 4850 FWD, PS, 20.8R 42 Rubber, 18.430 Front; JD 4640 C&A, 20.8x38; JD 4240 Hi-Crop, 4-post, rebuilt eng., 20.8x38 95%; JD 4230 C & A, QR, 20.8x38; JD 4230 Hi-Crop, 2-post, 20.8Rx 38; JD 4230 Salvage

PLANTERS: (3) Thompson Drum

EQUIPMENT: (4) JD 3-row Cult; Laviolette Drain Cleaner; JD 10' Dozer Blade; Ashland 3-yd. Scoop; Spray Booms; (6) sets Chain Net Mill Wagons; (2) set Chain Net Wagons w/o axles; 1,000 gal. nurse tank on trailer; JD 10' Flat Chopper, many other misc. items

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DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide is formulated as a dispersible granule, packaged in a resealable 20-pound poly bag. This new product may be applied at a maximum single application rate of 4 pounds broadcast per acre and not to exceed 11.25 pounds per year. At this rate, K-4™ delivers an amount of active ingredient equivalent to 1 quart of DuPont™ Velpar® L plus 2.25 pounds of Karmex® DF per broadcast acre. Now, with K-4™, you can get the same outstanding performance on tough weeds and grasses that you've come to expect from Velpar® L plus Karmex® DF in one convenient, easy-to-use resealable bag.

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This reference guide is not intended as a substitute for the product label for the products referenced herein. Product labels for the above products contain important precautions, directions for use and product warranty and liability limitations that must be read before using the product. Applicators must be in possession of the product labels at the time of application. Always read and follow all label directions and precautionsfor use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix combinations. Always wear proper protective equipment.

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New DuPont™ K-4™: Tough on Bermudagrass; Begin the Fight in Fallow

Louisiana sugarcane growers can now use new DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide for improved management of bermudagrass compared to traditional programs without the application hassles, unpleasant odors or problems with staining.

K-4™ herbicide is a new formulation of hexazinone and diuron in a single, water-dispersible product that is now registered by the EPA for use in Louisiana sugarcane. The new product offers the same broad-spectrum weed control as a tank mixture of DuPont™ Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides but with the convenience of an easy-to-use resealable bag. K-4™ is formulated as a highly soluble, dispersible granule and sold in 20-pound bags that will treat five acres at a rate of 4 pounds per acre. K-4™ is absorbed through the roots and foliage of weeds and grasses. For best weed control, at-planting applications should be made to a well-prepared, clod-free seedbed that is free of excess plant residue.

For the past several years, Louisiana sugarcane growers have reported improved management of bermudagrass with Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides now K-4™. They'll continue to see effective suppression using new K-4™.

Charlie Levert, Louisiana sugarcane farmer from St. Martin Parish, is looking forward to using new K-4™ based on his experience with Velpar® L and Karmex® DF herbicides.

"Our biggest grass pressure is bermudagrass," said Levert. "When you get a rainy season just like we've had last year, it's hard to get it. As soon as you chop bermudagrass in fallow, rain spreads it. But Velpar® and Karmex® (K-4™) suppresses it enough in fallow to get us to planting."

Levert follows his fallow program with a broadcast application of Velpar® and Karmex® (K-4™) at planting to maintain bermudagrass suppression. With the treatment and a good stand of plant cane to help shade out bermudagrass, Levert feels he is getting a handle on his bermudagrass before it establishes and becomes a major problem.

Al Broussard, a sales representative for 28 years with Helena Chemical Company in St. Martinville, La., introduced Levert to the Velpar® plus Karmex® tank mixture now K-4™ two years ago.

"In this sugarcane area, we have specific weed problems that not all herbicides control," said Broussard. "I became interested in Velpar® 20 years ago when we were looking for something to control itchgrass. Since then, bermudagrass has become a key weed for us because when you control all the other weeds, bermudagrass blossoms as it has no competition, except for the cane."

"When we plant cane in the fall on land that has a history of bermudagrass on it, and we've done a good job cultivating and using multiple applications of Roundup on it in the fallow, we can get rid of a lot of it. The last couple of years we have had pretty good results with Velpar® plus Karmex® (K-4™) suppressing bermudagrass."

"We looked at Velpar® plus Karmex® in fallow applications a few years ago to determine if we could omit some mechanical use in fallow," said Broussard. "That's when we realized the application had some activity on bermudagrass. With spot applications of Roundup on escapes, we can basically omit mechanical tillage in fallow. This can save time and money and help conserve moisture for planting by not opening up the row before it's time to plant."

Growers will see the best results with K-4™ when they have a good clod-free seedbed, make the application right behind planting, and get adequate moisture within 21 days.

Sandy soil and bermudagrass are two of the problems Levert often battles as a sugarcane farmer in Louisiana, and traditionally he used Prowl herbicide in his plant cane. "In testing the K-4™ formulation, K-4™ is easier to use than Prowl," he said. "It's not yellow, doesn't stain

your clothes and it works a lot better because it does a better job suppressing bermudagrass, where Prowl doesn't do anything."

Also, Levert is impressed by the excellent residual control the treatment exhibits on broadleaf weeds and grasses. "Prowl needs rain to be incorporated in the soil as does Velpar® plus Karmex® (K-4™), but it seems to wait on moisture longer than Prowl," he said.

"K-4™ should be a real good product. You will see more people go for it because it works a lot better, and it's easier to handle. It has no smell, and it doesn't turn everything yellow."

Andre Blanchard and his father also farm sugarcane in St. Martin Parish. Al Broussard introduced Blanchard to the tank mix of Velpar® plus Karmex® (K-4™) for suppression of bermudagrass on his plant cane in 2001.

"I'm the type of fellow that doesn't mind trying new things once, but I want to see it first hand in my own field, not on someone else's," Blanchard said. "In the plant cane crop of 2001, I had this field that was heavily infested with bermudagrass. We had a rainy fallow season and we couldn't apply Roundup like we wanted. So every chance we got, we'd work it mechanically, which is not a good practice with bermudagrass because all you do is transplant it if you get moisture soon after tillage."

"Al Broussard had seen good results suppressing bermudagrass from Velpar® plus Karmex® (K-4™) in some fallow fields, so he recommended we try it on this field with the bermudagrass pressure. We were in the middle of planting, so I sent one of our laborers to apply Velpar® at 1 quart per acre plus Karmex® at 2.25 pounds per acre.

"He accidentally missed two rows. Those rows were full of bermudagrass and everything else. The Velpar® plus Karmex® (K-4™) had suppressed the bermudagrass big time.

"Our primary plant cane preemerge products were Prowl plus Sencor. We experimented with the K-4™ formulation last year at planting and really liked it. No triple rinsing, no staining our clothes, trucks and equipment, and compared to Prowl plus Sencor, DuPont™ K-4™ is more economical."

Steps to Follow for Suppression of Bermudagrass

For suppression of bermudagrass in fallow sugarcane fields, apply DuPont™ K-4™ at 4 pounds per acre to a newly prepared seedbed that is free of clods and existing vegetation. If weeds are present at application, either a separate application of a contact herbicide or a tank mix partner is recommended for improved postemergence control. Make fallow applications at least 60 days prior to sugarcane planting.

An application of a contact herbicide may be needed to maintain suppression of bermudagrass prior to planting.

Apply K-4™ at 4 pounds per acre broadcast immediately following planting and row packing to maintain bermudagrass suppression.

# # #

Always read and follow all label directions and precautions for use when using any pesticide alone or in tank mix applications.

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2003 HIGH YIELD WINNERS
(2001 CROP)

Square B Farms

Top 20 Producer
18th Place

1st Place District
Acreage Winner -
Teche District
Category IV

Joe Broussard; Windell Jackson, League Agronomist; Edmond Broussard; Jimmy Flanigan, Iberia County Agent; Ted Broussard; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

B.J. LeJeune

Top 20 Producer
19th Place

2nd Place District
Acreage Winner -
Teche District
Category II

Brian, Jr. and Ricky LeJeune; Windell Jackson, League Agronomist; Joe LeJeune, Jimmy Flannigan, Iberia County Agent; B.J. LeJeune; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

B & W Farms, Inc.

Top 20 Producer
20th Place

Parish Winner
Ascension

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Warren Harang, III; James Garrett, Ascension County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Clement, Clement & Broussard

Acreage Winner - Teche District Category I

Windell Jackson, League Agronomist; Lenis (Boo) Clement; Jimmy Flanigan, Iberia County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Blanchard Brothers

1st Place District Acreage Winner - Teche District Category III

Parish Winner - St. Mary

Windell Jackson, League Agronomist; Harvey Blanchard; Jimmy Flanigan, Iberia County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Keith Morris

1st Place District Acreage Winner Northern District Category II

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Keith Morris; Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

Lloyd Huval, Jr. (No Photo Available)

2nd Place District Acreage Winner - Teche District Category I

Mark D. Patout

2nd Place District Acreage Winner Teche District Category III

Windell Jackson, League Agronomist; Christopher Patout; Jimmy Flanigan, Iberia County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Melancon Sugar Cane Farms

2nd Place District Acreage Winner Teche District Category IV

Parish Winner - St. Martin

Windell Jackson, League Agronomist; Nicky, Craig, and Brian Melancon; Alfred Guidry, St. Martin County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

Woods Farm, Inc.

2nd Place District Acreage Winner River/Bayou Lafourche District Category IV

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Eugene and Ronald Woods; Rick Louque, Assumption County Agent; and Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service

David Self

2nd Place
District Acreage
Winner Northern
District Category I

David Self

Rodney Poche

R & E Poche

2nd Place District
Acreage Winner
Northern District
Category II

Parish Winner -
East Baton Rouge

Kernie Gros

2nd Place District
Acreage Winner
Northern District
Category III

Parish Winner -
West Baton Rouge

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Mr. & Mrs. E.J. Gros, Tina and Kernie Gros; Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent;

Joe Beaud, III Farms

2nd Place District Acreage Winner Northern District Category IV

Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist; Miles Brashier, Pointe Coupee County Agent; Joe Beaud, III; Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service; and Harry Laws, West Baton Rouge County Agent

Big D Farms

Parish Winner - St. Charles

Dr. Ken Roberts, Associate Vice Chancellor & Associate Director, La. Cooperative Extension Service; Rene Schmidt, St. Charles County Agent; Denis Lanaux, III; and Herman Waguespack, League Agronomist

• •

The following winners, whose photos were printed in the May issue of The Sugar Bulletin, should have also been acknowledged for winning the District Winner awards:

Randall Rivere Farm, Inc. 6th Place Top 20 Producer should have also been acknowledged for winning the 1st Place District Acreage Category River/Bayou Lafourche District Category II.

Landry Farms, 13th Place Top 20 Producer should have also been acknowledged for winning the 2nd Place District Acreage Category River/Bayou Lafourche District Category III.

Glynn Rivet, 17th Place Top 20 Producer should have also been acknowledged for winning the 1st Place District Acreage Category River/Bayou Lafourche District Category IV.

THE 2002 LOUISIANA SUGARCANE VARIETY SURVEY

Benjamin L. Legendre
St. Gabriel Research Station
And
Kenneth A. Gravois
Sugar Research Station
LSU AgCenter

A sugarcane variety survey was conducted during the summer of 2002 by county agents in the 24 sugarcane-growing parishes of Louisiana to determine the variety makeup and distribution across the Sugarcane Belt in the state. The information presented in this report was summarized from those individual parish surveys.

Agents in each sugarcane-producing parish collected acreage figures by variety and crop from growers in their respective parishes. Eight varieties, CP 65-357, CP 70-321, CP 72-370, LCP 82-89, LHo 83-153, LCP 85-384, HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555, were named along with "Others" in the survey. The category of others included, but was not limited to, small acreages of CP 67-412, CP 74-383, CP 76-331, CP 79-318 and LCP 86-454. Crop was divided into four categories which included plant-cane, first-stubble, second-stubble and third-stubble and older crops. Additional information was collected as needed from the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices regarding acres of sugarcane grown in the parishes. However, not all growers participated in the survey; therefore, total acreage figures as reported may differ from those acres certified by FSA.

Actual acreages covered by this survey for each parish, region, and the statewide total are shown in Table 1. Figure 1 shows the parishes where sugarcane is grown in the state. Statewide, the area reported in this survey was 482,666 acres. This is 97.5% of the total acres planted to sugarcane as reported in Louisiana Agricultural Summary for 2002 (Anonymous 2002). Total acres for the 2002 survey for each of the three regions - Teche, River-Bayou Lafourche and Northern are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Estimated total sugarcane acres by parish and region for 2002[1].

Teche region		River-Bayou Lafourche region		Northern region	
Parish	**Acres**	**Parish**	**Acres**	**Parish**	**Acres**
Acadia	3,854	Ascension	15,018	Avoyelles	22,034
Calcasieu	5,500	Assumption	41,748	East Baton Rouge	532
Cameron	500	Iberville	36,224	Evangeline	3,021
Iberia	63,536	Lafourche	31,330	Pointe Coupee	31,566
Jeff Davis	7,700	St. Charles	1,630	Rapides	10,562
Lafayette	16,694	St. James	24,837	St. Landry	22,163
St. Martin	36,300	St. John	4,128	West Baton Rouge	15,454
St. Mary	44,940	Terrebonne	11,617		
Vermilion	31,778				
Total	210,802	Total	166,532	Total	105,332
Total all regions: 482,666					

[1] Estimates are based on 2002 variety survey information from county agents.

The estimated statewide sugarcane acreage in percent by variety and crop is shown in Table 2. The leading variety for 2002 was LCP 85-384, with 85% of the total acreage followed by HoCP 85-845,

CP 70-321 and HoCP 91-555 with 6, 5 and 3% of the total acreage, respectively. These are the only four varieties currently recommended for commercial planting in Louisiana (Legendre 2001). LCP 85-384 has been steadily increasing in popularity among growers since its release in 1993. No other variety occupied more than 1% of the total acreage in the current survey.

Table 2. Estimated statewide sugarcane acreage percentage by variety and crop, 2002[1].

Variety	Plant-cane	First-stubble	Second-stubble	Third-stubble and older	Total
	----------%----------				
CP 65-357	<1	<1	<1	1	<1
CP 70-321	3	4	6	7	5
CP 72-370	<1	1	1	1	1
LCP 82-89	<1	<1	1	1	<1
LHo 83-153	<1	<1	1	<1	<1
LCP 85-384	87	86	82	83	85
HoCP 85-845	4	5	8	7	6
HoCP 91-555	6	3	1	<1	3
Others	<1	<1	1	1	<1
Total acres	124,212	124,181	128,215	106,058	482,666
Percent total crop (%)	25.7	25.7	26.6	22.0	

[1]Based on 2002 variety survey information from county agents.

There was a tendency for growers in the Northern region to plant less cane each year (22.9%) and keep more older stubble crops (29.3% second-stubble and 25.6% third and older stubble)(Table 3). Conversely, there was a tendency for growers in the River-Bayou Lafourche region to plant more cane each year (27.9%) and keep less older stubble (26.2% second stubble and 17.3% third and older stubble) than the Northern region. The distribution by crop for the Teche region was generally intermediate of the other two regions. In recent years there has been a general tendency by the industry statewide to plant less cane while keeping more acreage in older stubble. Two of the four recommended varieties, LCP 85-384 and HoCP 85-845, are listed as very good stubbling varieties, and HoCP 91-555 is listed as moderate to good in its stubble behavior (Legendre 2001).

Undoubtedly, LCP 85-384 was the preferred variety in all regions (Tables 4, 5 and 6). In the Teche region, LCP 85-384 was the leading variety with 85% of the total area followed by CP 70-321 with 8% and HoCP 85-845 with 4% (Table 4). HoCP 91-555, released for commercial planting in 1999, has not been widely accepted by growers in the Teche region with only a 2% share of the planted area. LCP 85-384 occupied 84% of the area in the River-Bayou Lafourche region (Table 5). However, HoCP 85-845 was the second most popular variety with 9% of the planted area followed by only 2% for both CP 70-321 and HoCP 91-555. For the Northern region, LCP 85-384 occupied 86% of the planted area (Table 6). HoCP 85-845 was planted on 6% of the area followed by HoCP 91-555 with 4% and CP 70-321 with 3%.

Only two varieties, LCP 85-384 and HoCP 91-555, showed an increase in the acreage grown in 2002 when compared to the previous year (Table 7) (Legendre & Gravois 2002). All other varieties in the survey either decreased in area or remained the same from the previous year. CP 70-321

Table 3. Estimated sugarcane distribution by region and crop, 2002[1].

Crop	Teche	River-Bayou Lafourche	Northern	State total
Plant-cane				
acres	53,582	46,508	24,122	124,212
%	25.4	27.9	22.9	25.7
First-stubble				
acres	53,310	47,528	23,343	124,181
%	25.3	28.6	22.2	25.7
Second-stubble				
acres	53,712	43,633	30,871	128,215
%	25.5	26.2	29.3	26.6
Third-stubble				
and older acres	50,198	28,86317.3	26,996	106,058
%	23.8	17.3	25.6	22.0
Total acres	210,802	166,532	105,332	482,666

[1]Based on 2002 variety survey information from county agents.

Table 4. Estimated Teche region acreage percentage by variety and crop, 2002[1].

Variety	Plant-cane	First- stubble	Second-stubble	Third-stubble and older	Total
CP 65-357	0	<1	<1	<1	<1
CP 70-321	6	7	9	10	8
CP 72-370	<1	1	1	1	1
LCP 82-89	<1	<1	1	1	1
LHo 83-153	0	0	<1	<1	<1
LCP 85-384	88	85	82	83	85
HoCP 85-845	2	3	5	4	4
HoCP 91-555	4	2	1	<1	2
Others	<1	<1	1	1	1

[1]Based on 2002 variety survey information from county agents.

Table 5. Estimated River-Bayou Lafourche region sugarcane acreage percentage by variety and crop, 2002[1].

Variety	Plant-cane	First-stubble	Second- stubble	Third-stubble and older	Total
CP 65-357	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1
CP 70-321	1	2	3	4	2
CP 72-370	<1	1	1	1	1
LCP 82-89	<1	0	1	1	<1
LHo 83-153	<1	1	2	1	1
LCP 85-384	90	86	78	79	84
HoCP 85-845	1	7	13	12	9
HoCP 91-555	1	3	1	<1	2
Others	<1	1	1	1	1

[1]Based on 2002 variety survey information from county agents.

Table 6. Estimated Northern Region sugarcane acreage percentage by variety and crop, 2002[1].

Variety	Plant-cane	First- stubble	Second-stubble	Third-stubble and older	Total
CP 65-357	0	0	0	2	<1
CP 70-321	1	2	4	4	3
CP 72-370	0	0	0	<1	<1
LCP 82-89	0	0	<1	<1	<1
LHo 83-153	0	<1	<1	<1	<1
LCP 85-384	80	87	89	88	86
HoCP 85-845	7	5	6	5	6
HoCP 91-555	11	5	1	<1	4
Others	<1	<1	<1	<1	<1

[1]Based on 2002 variety survey information from county agents.

Table 7. Louisiana sugarcane variety trends 1998-2002[1].

	% of Louisiana total acreage by year					
Variety	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	1 yr. Change
CP 65-357	3	1	1	1	<1	-1
CP 70-321	29	20	13	8	5	-3
CP 72-370	5	3	2	1	1	0
LCP 82-89	7	5	2	1	<1	-1
LHo 83-153	3	3	2	1	<1	-1
LCP 85-384	43	58	71	78	85	+7
HoCP 85-845	6	8	8	7	6	-1
HoCP 91-555	-	<1	<1	1	3	+2
Others	1	<1	<1	1	<1	-1

[1]Based on annual variety survey reports from county agents in sugarcane-producing parishes, 1998-2002.

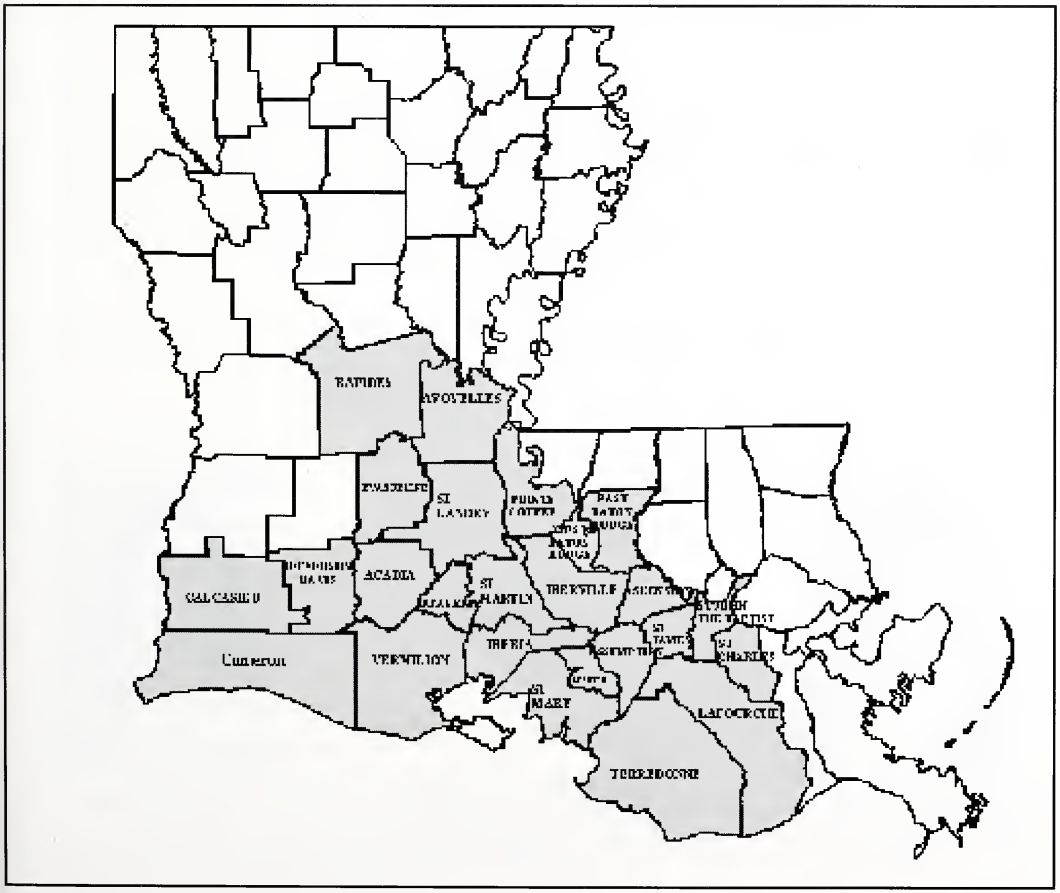
continues its decline in popularity with a decrease of 3 % from crop year 2001. This is a drop of 46 percentage points from its high of 49% in 1995. LCP 85-384, now at 85%, is the first variety to reach more than 70% of the total acreage in recent history since CP 65-357, released in 1973, occupied 71% of the acreage in 1980. LCP 85-384 is a high-yielding, excellent-stubbling variety; however, it has a tendency to lodge and is very susceptible to the sugarcane borer. The variety produces a large number of small stalks and consistently out-yields the other three recommended commercial varieties in tons of cane and sugar per acre (Waguespack et al. 2002).

It is anticipated that LCP 85-384 will continue to gain in popularity for the near term, with the possible exception of the Northern region, because of its superior yielding ability in tons of cane and sugar per acre and will remain the top variety in the state until comparable or superior varieties are released for commercial production from the breeding program. It is further anticipated that the remaining varieties will continue to decrease in total acreage, with the possible exception of HoCP 91-555. HoCP 91-555 is being considered as a possible alternative to LCP 85-384 by some growers, especially in the Northern region where the plant-cane crop reached 11% in 2002. However; it is not anticipated that this variety will ever become a major variety statewide. Because of the possibility of an early frost in the Northern region, growers have possibly selected HoCP 91-555 because of its

early maturity and its mostly erect growth habit. This allows for the harvest of this variety by both combine and whole-stalk harvesters. On the other hand, LCP 85-384 frequently lodges and is brittle and difficult to harvest when lodged. Since 1995, most of the growers in the state have converted to the combine harvest system to take advantage of the superior yielding ability of LCP 85-384.

Most sugarcane-growing areas of the world are currently in a situation where there is not a high dependence on a single variety as is the case in Louisiana (Tew 1987). The need to avoid genetic vulnerability was seen in Cuba several years ago when its growers suffered substantial yield losses due to a rust epidemic and the heavy dependence on one variety, B 4362. Guidelines were established in Cuba wherein individual growers were advised not to plant more than 30% of their area with their leading commercial variety. It is known that LCP 85-384 is now considered susceptible to rust as well; however, it appears that rust has not caused a significant reduction in its yield. A similar situation occurred recently in Australia with Q124 and susceptibility to orange rust. However, once a clearly superior variety, as is the case with LCP 85-384, has been identified in a sugarcane-growing area, the inadvisability of becoming highly dependent on a single variety must be weighed against the increased profitability anticipated from the culture of only one variety; occasionally expectations will outweigh potential risk considerations (Tew 1987). In a continuing effort to lessen the dependence on one variety, the Louisiana variety development program is constantly striving to develop other new, superior varieties that are as good as or better than LCP 85-384; however, the task has not been an easy one.

Figure 1. Louisiana sugarcane growing parishes



Acknowledgments

We acknowledge the assistance of the county agents for soliciting the sugarcane variety information published in this survey. We also want to thank the sugarcane producers who took the time and effort to respond to the survey from their agents.

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Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2002.

Sugarcane Breeding in the LSU Agricultural Center, Kenneth A. Gravois and Keith P. Bischoff; Sugar Research Station

The primary objective of the LSU Agricultural Center Sugarcane Variety Development Program is to contribute to the profitability of the Louisiana sugarcane industry by developing improved sugarcane varieties. A total of 86,375 seedlings from 248 crosses from the 2001 crossing series were planted in the field in the spring of 2002. A total of 79,719 seedlings survived transplanting. In addition, 6,644 seedlings were planted in a cross appraisal trial. The majority of the seedlings were from crosses of commercial varieties and elite experimental varieties. Selection will be carried out in 2003 when the seedlings are in the first stubble crop.

Photoperiod treatments to induce flowering began on May 31 and continued until September 10. Flowering in 2002 was excellent, with 513 crosses being made. Germination tests were conducted in December and January. Seed production for 2002 should be more than adequate based on early germination test results.

In the fall of 2002, individual selection was practiced on 68,214 first stubble seedlings that represented the 2000 crossing series. Family selection (top 90% in 2002) was utilized based on information from the cross appraisal study. Of the 68,214 clones, 4,126 were selected and planted to establish the first-line trials.

Excessive rainfall during 2002 prevented the planting of the 1999 crossing series from first-line trials to second-line trials. However, the first line trials were rated in August for advancement and evaluated again in mid-September for lodging, borer damage, presence of disease, presence of pith/tube. The remaining 1343 clones from the plant cane first line trials were sampled for a sucrose analysis in December 2002. The 1998 crossing series represented in second-line trials was selected and advanced to increase trials (331 clones). These clones were advanced based on adequate stalk population and further evaluated for lodging, borer damage, presence of disease, and the presence of pith/tube.

The best 40 experimental varieties from the 1997 crossing series were assigned permanent variety designations in the fall of 2002. Newly assigned varieties were planted in a replicated nursery trial and a corresponding increase plot at the St. Gabriel Research Station only. 'L' , 'HoCP or Ho' varieties of the 2002 series were not exchanged between LSU and USDA in the fall of 2002 to plant cooperative infield and nursery tests the following year. Seed exchange will occur in 2003.

Experimental varieties were replanted in infield and nursery tests (12 varieties of the 2001 series), introduced to the outfield tests (five varieties of the 2000 series), and planted in outfield tests (one variety of the 1997 series; one variety of the 1998 series; two varieties of the 1999 series). Breeding personnel assisted Dr. Jeff Hoy and Dr. Gene Reagan to enter experimental varieties in the sugarcane smut and sugarcane-borer-resistance trials, respectively.

Meeting the Challenges of Increasing Sugar Yields Through Variety Testing in Nurseries, Infield Trials, Outfield Trials and Specialty Studies, Edwis O. Dufrene, Agronomist; Donnie Garrison, Agronomist; Edward P. Richard, Research Leader, USDA ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA.

The year 2002 can be summarized as follows: drought, floods, tropical storm, and hurricane, followed by rain, rain, and more rain. Fortunately, most off-station nursery and infield trials were planted in August and early September before the major rains started. However, because HoCP assignments are traditionally made in mid-October, only one nursery (with an increase plot) was planted instead of the three tests normally planted. Another planting which was unable to be accomplished this past year was the establishment of a 'third line trial'. Simply put, third line trials are seed increases of promising clones in the plant cane of second line trials. It is from these third line trials that seed is cut to plant tests and seed increases when a variety is assigned a permanent number. It is unknown exactly how the lack of these tests and increases will affect the breeding program. Besides the two nurseries that were not planted, a seed exchange of varieties from the 2001 assignment series was not realized. It can probably be assumed that more varieties will be advanced and replanted next year because of the shortage of field plots for data collection in the plant cane tests and also, the questionable nature of some of the data collected in 2002. Because there will be no seed plot available for HoCP 2003 assignments, seed will have to be cut from the first stubble second line trial plot. The repercussion is that these plots will be required to have a minimum number of stalks just to be considered for assignment and great care will have to be taken when cutting and carrying out stalks from these plots for seed use.

Status and Results of the 2002 Projects: Eight infield trials (with varieties from the 1995 through the 1999 HoCP and L series), fifteen nursery trials (containing varieties from the 1998 through the 2001 HoCP series) were harvested in 2002. Data from these trials are currently being analyzed.

Three date of planting tests were harvested in 2002. Two of these tests also looked at the effect of planting date on method of planting (billet vs. whole stalk). Although an analysis has not been completed at this time, tests in previous years have consistently shown an advantage to planting early, particularly with HoCP 85-845. LCP 85-384 has generally been the least affected by date of planting.

Maturity curves for the current and soon to be released varieties were developed using a 2-week harvesting interval beginning on August 26, 2002. In addition, studies designed to look at varietal responses to the ripener, Polado, and studies designed to look at alternatives to Polado were repeated in 2002. The variety HoCP 91-540, which is a candidate for release in 2003, was found to have a positive response to Polado. With respect to alternatives, two non-selective herbicides, Arsenal and Oust, were also found to have sucrose-enhancing capabilities similar to Polado.

Breeding and Management Research with Sugarcane at the Iberia Research Station, Dr. Howard P. Viator; Iberia Research Station, Dr. Kenneth Gravois; Sugar Research Station

Experimental clones were evaluated in nine LSU AgCenter and seven USDA breeding nurseries and "infield" tests located within the Bayou Teche Region. Each of these tests contain up to 100 clones, replicated twice. Selections from these nurseries are advanced to the statewide outfield testing program. Outstanding clones are also useful as parents in the recurrent selection program.

Plant cane of the second cane cycle of a long-term study of the effects of combine-trash management was harvested in 2002. Of particular interest are the changes in soil fertility over time and the effects of residue management on successive crop cycles (plant cane through third stubble). Cycle two plant cane yields were 35.1, 33.2 and 31.2 tons of cane/acre for the standing burn, physical trash removal

and full trash retention treatments, respectively. Though these means are not statistically different for this harvest, their ranking is consistent with treatment effects in the previous cycle (three-crop averages of cycle one for the above three treatments were 44.3, 44.7 and 41.2 tons of cane/acre), suggesting a carryover effect from cycle one to the plant cane crop of cycle two. Soil samples taken during the fallow period between the two production cycles revealed numerically higher levels of soil nitrogen and carbon where combine residue was retained and not burned. This trend implies the possibility of beneficial long-term effects of trash retention.

Utilization of Basic Germplasm in Developing High-Yielding Sugarcane Cultivars, John Veremis, Research Geneticist; Thomas Tew, Research Geneticist; Edwis Dufrene, Agronomist; Donnie Garrison, Agronomist; Michael Grisham, Research Plant Pathologist; Sarah Lingle, Research Plant Physiologist; Yong-Bao Pan, Research Plant Molecular Geneticist; William White, Research Entomologist; Ed Richard, Research Leader: USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA

The basic breeding program of the Sugarcane Research Unit (SRU) at Houma uses photoperiod and greenhouse facilities constructed with funds provided by the American Sugar Cane League (ASCL) to develop improved sugarcane breeding lines with desirable traits obtained from wild relatives of sugarcane. Wild relatives of sugarcane including clones of *Saccharum spontaneum*, *Sorghum, Miscanthus and Erianthus* are extremely important in sugarcane breeding because of the disease and insect resistance, hardiness, and vigor they impart in the development of elite germplasm (breeding parents and varieties). Three recent varieties released to the Louisiana industry, including LCP 85-384, were developed from parents originating from the effort to broaden the genetic base of sugarcane. Both USDA-bred varieties currently scheduled for commercial release, HoCP 96-540 and Ho 95-988, are products of our basic breeding efforts.

Status and Results of 2002 Project: During Fall and Winter of 2002, over 900 crosses were made at Houma that involved a highly diverse range of parents and cross combinations. Many of these crosses were made possible with the use of 6" pot culture, expanded photoperiod capacity, and expanded numbers of cubicles for forming crosses, all made possible with funds provided by the industry.

During 2002, we imported more than 40 new clones. These will be used during the Fall 2003 crossing season (including 11 clones from Thailand). We built concrete slabs for maintenance of S. *spontaneum* clones, and upgraded our quarantine facility. We acquired some 36 reusable crossing lanterns from Hawaii that were hung in our bayouside greenhouse, effectively tripling our capacity for forming bi-parental crosses during peak flowering periods and avoiding pollen contamination.

Hot water experiments were conducted with clones of *Saccharum* to determine the optimum temperatures and times needed to destroy pollen in male fertile tassels. Having a technique that would cause male sterility, would allow breeders to cross two naturally male fertile clones with less concern about unwanted selfing, thus increasing the number and range of genetic combinations possible in a crossing season.

A photoperiod experiment was conducted with clones of *S. spontaneum* in an effort to delay their flowering so that tassels would be available for crossing over multiple times in the crossing season. This was the first time that some *S. spontaneum* clones flowered at times that allowed them to be used as parents in during periods when they could be involved in highly desirable genetic combinations. The basic breeding will broaden the genetic developing new and improved sugarcane germplasm, by making crosses with various Saccharum species and related genera. Conventional and molecular genetic development of sugarcane productivity by characterizing and utilizing exotic germplasm for Louisiana conditions. A basic breeding program was established with the objective to broaden the genetic makeup of the parents used to produce new superior varieties.

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2. There will be a 10 item limit with only farm equipment listed.

3. Ads will be placed for two months at a time only. If you wish to run for another two months, please call the League office at (985) 448-3707 prior to the due date.

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THE SUGAR BULLETIN

Official Bulletin of the American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A.

John F. Gay

42nd Chairman of the Board of the American Sugar Cane League

The Sugar Bulletin

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John F. Gay
42nd Chairman of the Board

At the Annual Meeting of the American Sugar Cane League, which was held March 5, 2003, Mr. John F. Gay of Plaquemine, LA was elected to serve as the 42nd Chairman of the Board of the organization. Mr. Gay is a co-owner/operator of St. Louis Planting, Inc., which cultivates 3,500 acres of sugarcane in Iberville and Pointe Coupee parishes.

Mr. Gay is a graduate of Sewanee Military Academy and Louisiana State University where he holds a bachelor's degree in Agribusiness. After a brief employment with the LSU Agricultural Experiment Station, he returned to his family farming operations on St. Louis Plantation. Mr. Gay has served on the Board of Directors of the American Sugar Cane League for many years serving as chairman of a number of committees. He also serves on the board of the E.J. Gay P & M Co., Ltd., Lower Delta Soil and Water Conservation District (Vice-President), Iberville Parish Farm Bureau (past president), Cane Equipment Cooperative and the Plaquemine Rotary Club. He is a member of the American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists, the AG Leaders of Louisiana, the Church of the Holy Communion in Plaquemine and is active in the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana.

Married to the former Karen Richards of Baton Rouge, they are the parents of four daughters.

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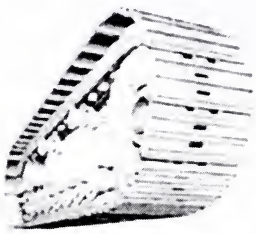

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

Disaster Assistance - Mexico -Excess Weights

At this writing, it has become apparent that everything that has ever been said about bureaucrats (which usually isn't real nice) appears to be true. There are exceptions to the rule, and the USDA is one of them. After passage of legislation to give the industry some disaster relief, after several months of working with good bureaucrats in an effort to identify the 'whys' and 'wherefores' of a delivery system, everything got sent to Washington. The USDA (as I stated, the good bureaucrats) moved expeditiously to circulate the necessary documents by the proper agencies, and then . . . well, from there, it is history. After the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) received the sign off forms, they have squatted firmly on them and they haven't moved an inch since. That was in late April and it is now June 15th. All the time interest payments accumulate for Louisiana cane farmers with no relief money readily in site.

In the meantime, let me say thank you to Congressman Billy Tauzin and his staff on their efforts to break this log jam that has developed at OMB. The Congressman and his staff began an intervention several days ago upon my request, and we are hopeful that things should start moving, more particularly in the right direction, by the beginning of the week (June 16). We are also lucky in this state to have members of Congress, even those who don't have cane grown in their districts, who understand our concerns and needs and are ready and willing to assist us when we have problems. But, for now, thank you Billy!

As for when we will actually see money from Washington? At best, I believe that checks won't be delivered until late August based on the time schedules that the USDA must follow. Our original hope was to have farmers knowing how much money would be coming in the month of May or early June, and deliver the money by mid to late July. Look to late August, maybe early September for delivery. That is, if OMB's objections can be overcome by next week (June 16-20). In the meantime, the League office is on the phone daily checking to see what, if anything, can or should be done.

It is my hope that by the time you receive the Bulletin in the first part of July we will have seen the Public Notice from USDA, and that mills and growers will have been notified of time frames to be met and delivery schedules for the disaster money. As one grower expressed in frustration recently, "had the government acted timely, I might have been able to take less money (he was being a bit facetious); but, now I need more money because I had to extend my loans to September." The irony is that if this is not resolved soon and the money delivered in August, these loans may need to be extended to the next quarter. But, that doesn't help financially with planting and other costs being incurred in this year to make a crop. It is extremely problematic, at best!

Mexico

Jackie Theriot and the Mexican Task Force (MTF) had meetings in Mexico and D.C.

recently. It appears that there is no common ground for settlement on the disagreement with Mexico, but not necessarily because the two countries can't reach some agreement on sugar. It is felt that the sugar industries in each country could possibly find some common ground to each party's concerns, but it doesn't seem to please the Corn Refiners. And, that is where this whole matter gets real murky. For some reason the Corn Refiners (and please note that all people in the corn industry don't feel the same), believe that we are holding up their moving into Mexico. Well, the real truth of the matter is that this whole thing goes back to when the senior Bush trade negotiators negotiated a bad deal in the NAFTA. If you will recall, we had to get a side letter because someone tied our interest to others in the trade pact. And I might add, against our staunch opposition, thus the reason for the NAFTA SIDE LETTER. It appears that some outside of our industry would rather point fingers and accuse our industry for their problems rather than realize that they may be the actual problem. As the Manager of the League, I have always encouraged dialogue on all issues. However, the ASA has asked several times for meetings with the Corn Refiners only to receive **no** response. You see, some people believe in having friends in high places, and the Corn Refiners have ready access to the White House Ag liaison's office because a person there was the former CEO for their organization, and therefore pressure keeps on the USTR (US Trade Representative) to solve corn's problem. The only catch is that it would be at our expense, and that doesn't appear to be of any concern to them. While we (ASA) continue to be nice to our sweetener allies, they continue to push for a deal that would be harmful, if not devastating, to our industry.

As my Father would have observed, "there is room in this world for everyone." It is just that some are greedy and self-serving. I would hope that our allies, the corn industry, would work with our sugar industry to find mutually beneficial avenues that may resolve some of the issues. All issues may not be resolvable. But honestly, no viable industry should be destroyed so another can prosper. Remember, there is room enough for "all" on this good earth.

I might add that I will probably ruffle some feathers with my comments. But people deserve to understand some of the underlying problems, and this is a big one. Maybe if we're lucky, our corn friends might read this article and respond to the sugar industry's request to sit at the table and talk rather than to continue to undermine our efforts for their own selfish gains. We all have plenty of money invested in each of our industries, we're both in the sweetener business, and we're all Americans. Can't we talk to each other?

Excess Weights

By the time this issue of the Bulletin reaches you, the Louisiana state legislature should have completed the 2003 Legislative session. Also, both bills that make up the package to allow us to continue to receive permits for hauling 100,000 pounds GVW (gross vehicle weight) should be enacted into law. From there the focus then moves to Washington, and Congressman Richard Baker and the House Highway & Transportation Committee to assure that the feds recognize our efforts and allow for the continuation of federal highway hauling at the same limits.

The Legislators, DOTD officials, State Police and others commended our industry on our efforts to bring ourselves into compliance. There was much discussion by legislators and industry groups to use our legislation as a model to provide their own industries with some hauling efficiencies. They felt our proposal may be an answer to their problems. I wish to thank the growers, processors, haulers, and others (including state and federal agency people) that worked with the League to formulate this legislation. I would also like to thank the legislators for recognizing our efforts in this matter.

The two bills provide for:

Scale Lockout Bill

1. Lock out of all sugar mill scales at 100,000 pounds.
2. Fines and penalties for violations are subject to present state law that deal with scales and weights.

(Continued on page 14)

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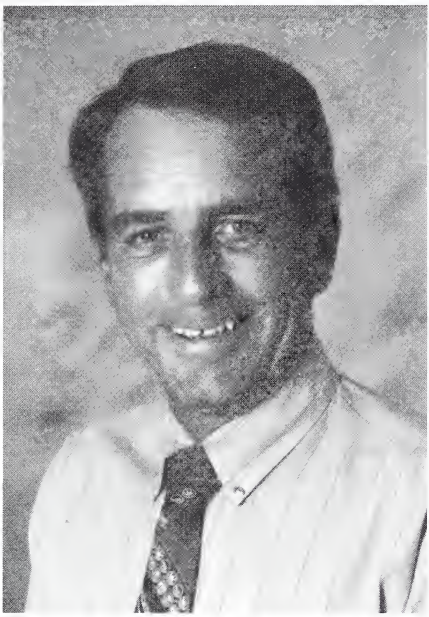

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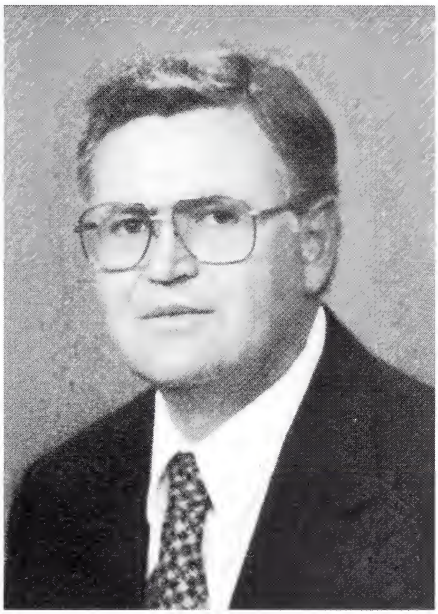

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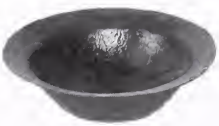

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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Budget Allocations
USDA Provides FY04 Marketing Allocation to AZ Entrant
Beet New Entrant Hearing
USDA WASDE June Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

Following a White House conference with congressional leaders, House and Senate appropriators were given budget allocations in mid-June and were moving forward with plans to mark-up agricultural appropriations in the latter-half of the month. The White House meeting resulted in the release of an additional $5.2 billion addition to domestic spending parameters, including $3 billion from defense spending.

The budget deal sets the FY04 spending for agricultural appropriations at $17 billion, compared to $17.4 billion in FY03 and $17.1 billion in the Administration's budget request. Unfortunately, because appropriators agreed in the FY03 appropriations package to prohibit USDA from spending $450 million in export subsidies under the Export Enhancement Program in order to utilize that money elsewhere, the real reduction in spending parameters is closer to $843 million.

USDA Provides FY04 marketing allocation to AZ entrant

USDA in early June informed the new entrant applicant from Arizona that it would receive a cane sugar marketing allocation of not more than 50,000 tons for the 2004 marketing year (MY), assuming that the Arizona Sugar Factory demonstrates its ability to process, produce and market MY04 raw cane sugar. In the letter to the Arizona applicant, CCC stressed that it will need evidence of (1) 2004-crop sugarcane acreage sufficient to fulfill the allocation, (2) the means to harvest and transport the crop to the mill, (3) the mill's ability to process the sugarcane into marketable raw sugar, (4) a transportation system to transport raw sugar to a refinery, and (5) a marketing agreement for the raw cane sugar.

Further, CCC warned that the applicant cannot sell 2004-crop over-allocation sugar to permit another processor to meet its allocation, nor may the applicant by 2004-crop over-allocation sugar to meet its allocation. Any adverse impacts from the new allocation will be distributed proportionately among all mainland processors.

Beet New Entrant Hearing

USDA held a hearing in mid-June to seek comments on its decision to refuse a request for a beet new entrant application for Cargill, and its decision to refuse an adjustment to the allocation of Pacific Northwest Sugar Company. In both cases, nearly the entire beet industry was opposed to the application in question, with the exception of the affected parties.

The Louisiana, Florida, Texas and Hawaiian sugar cane industry joined in submitting a letter to USDA in opposition to the Cargill application. The cane industry stressed that any decisions on the beet applications should set no precedents that would be binding on the cane sugar marketing allotments. Further, the cane industry opposed the Cargill application on the merits, arguing that there is no objective measure by

which Cargill can be considered a "processor" for purposes of the allotment program, that the application appears to be an attempt to circumvent the sugar beet processor allocation formula, and that approval of said application would have implications on other sugar programs operated by USDA.

USDA WASDE June Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its June World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was decreased to 8,404,000 short tons (raw value) from 8,450,000 in May. Beet production was unchanged at 4,450,000 short tons, while cane production was slightly increased at 3,954,000. 2003/04 production was unchanged at 8,595,000, with beet and cane production remaining at 4,450,000 and 4,145,000, respectively. Louisiana cane sugar production was unchanged for 2002/03 at 1,360,000 short tons, while the 2003/04 projection remained at 1,600,000 short tons. The 2002/03 estimate of total imports was decreased to 1,623,000 from 1,665,000 short tons, with imports under TRQ reduced slightly to 1,258,000 from 1,265,000, and imports under re-export unchanged at 340,000. This drove total supply downward to 11,308,000 from11,346,000 in May. 2002/03 exports were unchanged at 155,000, further reducing ending stocks to 1,563,000 from 1,601,000 and resulting in an ending stocks-to-use ratio of 16.0 percent versus16.4 percent in May.

The 38,000 reduction in carry-in stocks, attributed to a reduced level of imports of molasses and high-tier sugar, resulted in a slight reduction of 2003/04 total supply to 11,739,000 short tons from 11,802,000 in May. Production for beet and cane was unchanged at 4,450,000 and 4,145,000 short tons, respectively. Exports and domestic uses were unchanged at 10,200,000, resulting in a lowering of ending stocks to 1,539,000 from 1,602,000 in May, and the stocks-to-use ratio was reduced to 15.1 percent from 15.7 percent in May.

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ON THE FARM

By Windell Jackson

Crop Report - Core Lab Formula
January Plantings Rust and LCP 85-384

As one travels the cane belt, those areas where water stood and/or were slow to drain during the winter are very evident. What cane there is in these spots, is very short. But, in most of these spots, there is little or no cane to be found. Even though herbicides were applied, because there is no cane to shade the row, grass is taking over and will soon overtake what little cane survived the wet winter conditions.

As calendars were being switched to the month of June, the majority of the cane belt was reporting a major deficit in rainfall. Many were reporting rainfall deficits of 10 or more inches. Older stubble fields in heavy soils were showing a lack of moisture. In heavy soils, it was quite common to find fields that were off color, short, and not growing. The lack of growth because of the late start in the spring and the dry field conditions is indicated by the growth measurements from the USDA Ardoyne Farm near Houma, LA. The growth measurements for the last week in May for plant cane LCP 85-384 are shorter than growth measurements for any of the previous four years. If growth measurements for first stubble, for the same week in May, are examined, it is not until 1996 that the growth measurements are shorter. **Height at this time of the year in not as important as is number of stalks that have a likelihood of making mature stalks at harvest.**

With a couple of rains after the first of June, this changed very quickly. Rainfall totals changed from deficits to more than normal. At the writing of this article on June 13, 2003, the entire cane belt has received some rain. A large number of the fields have received more than ten inches of rain. Reports coming from the Youngsville area indicate that in the first two weeks of June the area was blessed with more than fifteen inches of precipitation. Most of this precipitation fell in two rain events, and fell in a very short time.

Populations in plant cane and stubble fields that were well drained during the winter have improved greatly with the dry weather. As mentioned previously in this article, fields that have low, poorly drained areas with little or no cane have not improved. Even with all of the weak spots and the large amount of older stubble, most growers are of the opinion that they have the potential to produce an average crop. The one stipulation to that estimation is that there must be adequate and timely rain. The state's average for the last five years (1998 – 2002) is 34.2 tons per acre. This five-year average includes 1999, which had an average of 37.0 tons per acre. If 1999 is left out, then the state's average is 33.5. If this crop does turn out to produce its potential of an average crop, then the state's tonnage should be somewhere between 33 and 34 tons of cane per acre.

Core Lab Formula

The average pounds of sugar per gross ton of cane for the five years prior to 2002 (1997 – 2001) is 205 pounds. In 2002, the average for the year only reached 180 pounds of sugar per gross ton of cane. Because of the low sugar content reported by the mill core labs, a number of growers have questioned the accuracy of their predictions. Many growers are of the opinion that due to the poor conditions during the past harvest that the formula now in use by mills in their core-labs may have greatly under predicted the amount of sugar in a ton of cane. According to Dr. Harold Birkett, this is probably not true. A quick look at the mill recoveries for the 2001 – 2002 crop indicates an average recovery of 103.99%. The same mills averaged 100.89% for

the 2002 - 2003 crop. This would suggest that the core was not **grossly** under predicting sugar that could be recovered from cane coming to the mill, but was **very slightly** under predicting the sugar in a ton of cane. There are many other factors that affect a mill's recovery, such as the inability to remove a lot of the incoming mud during washing. Hopefully, Dr. Birkett can be coaxed into writing a more detailed article in an upcoming issue of the Bulletin.

January Plantings

A handful of growers planted billet cane this past January. The plantings were in fields that were to be planted during the 2002 planting, but because of all of the rain, they were not planted. Most of the acreage planted in January was planted on light soils, but there were some acres of heavy soil planted. The plantings were of billeted LCP 85-384. Not wanting to stress the fields any more than they already were, a pre-emerge application of herbicide was not applied. At this time, many of the fields are seriously infested with johnsongrass and other weeds. For the cane planted in January, stands in the light and the heavy soil, compare favorably to fields from previous years of late season succession planted cane. While stands are not thick - they are regular, and there are no long gaps. Even though the stands are not as thick as normal in plant cane and high tonnage is not probable, it is likely that the following stubble crops will yield as good as other stubble fields that were planted at a more normal planting date.

This year, weed problems can also be found in many fields of plant cane. A lesson re-learned by a number of growers is the importance of applying pre-emerge herbicides as soon as possible after planting. Because of the weather conditions, fields were planted and the application of herbicide was not completed until a month or more later. It is amazing how many and how long johnsongrass seeds can survive. Thick infestations of bermudagrass are prevalent in plant cane and stubble fields alike. In plant cane, in addition to delayed application of herbicide, the length of time the herbicides were required to work has contributed to the lack of weed control. With the early start of harvest, growers are planting earlier and are stretching the length of time that the herbicide is required to work. Some growers delayed their early spring (winter) application of herbicides. This change in normal practices was due to high costs and low returns from the 2002 – 2003 crop and the weather conditions during January and February. With better crops and better weather conditions, these factors will correct themselves.

Rust and LCP 85-384

There are many fields of LCP 85-384 showing symptoms of rust. Most rust infected fields are plant cane. As has been observed in other crop years, rust first appears in the more advanced fields. Likewise, this year most fields of rusted cane are fields that were the lushest, most actively growing, and very green - before they were turned orange by infestations of rust. There are a few fields that have such severe infections of rust that it looks as if they may have been accidentally sprayed with herbicide. Upon closer observation, by rubbing a finger across the backside of an infected leaf, the roughness caused by the pustules of the rust spores can be felt. In addition, the spores will come off on the finger that is rubbed across the bottom of the leaf.

In discussions with growers in whose fields the more severe spots of rust were found, there seems to be a common factor. The more severe spots of rust are found in areas of the field where, during precision grading of the field, much soil was deposited in order to raise its elevation. It is speculated that the soil in these areas does not have a normal water holding capacity. It is further speculated that because of this good internal drainage and because of higher natural fertility, cane got off to an early start and out grew the parts of the field that were not filled. Because of their more advanced growth, the cane in these spots were more susceptible to early infections of rust. During the dry period, symptoms of drought quickly appeared, and in combination with the rust infection caused much and more severe damage to the leaves than either the rust or the dry conditions would have done independently.

Cool nights (60 - 65°) with normal morning dews, along with dry windy days with temperatures of around 80° or so are conditions most favorable to the production of rust spores and the infection of other non infected plants. With the higher day and night temperatures, the severity of rust infections should decrease. Now that most cane fields have plenty of moisture, cane should start its grand growth stage, growing very rapidly, putting on many new leaves, thereby out growing the severe effects of rust.

THE LAST DAY ON WHICH APPLICATIONS FOR SEED CANE OF HoCP 96-540 CAN BE ACCEPTED IS AUGUST 8, 2003

The cane will cost $36.00 per ton. The League will keep $1.00 per ton and give the rest to the Secondary Stations. The League will make every effort to fill orders at locations selected by applicants. It is important that you fill out the application completely (first, second, and third choices) so that we might provide you with the best service.

To apply for seed, return this completed form by mail

APPLICATION FOR HoCP 96-540 SEED CANE

Date _____

TO: American Sugar Cane League of the U.S.A., Inc.
P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302-0938

I hereby apply for _____ tons of HoCP 96-540 seed cane. I agree to pay when an allocation is assigned to me. I am to be notified concerning the allocation and supplied with the name and address of the grower from whom I am to get the cane. I will send for the cane on a specified delivery date. I understand that this cane will not be trash free.

If for any reason this order cannot be filled, it is understood that my money will be refunded.

My 2003 **total acreage** in cane for **sugar and seed** is _____ acres.

The locations from which I wish to receive my allocation are:

1st choice _____

2nd choice _____

3rd choice _____

This application is made with the full understanding, on my part, that it may not be possible to get as much cane as I apply for, and that there is no guarantee expressed or implied that this seed is free of mixtures, diseases, insects, weeds or weed seeds.

My farm is located between these two towns: _____ and

_____

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____

Zip _____

Phone # (Day) _____ (Evening) _____

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LIST OF STATIONS WHERE HoCP 96-540 IS AVAILABLE

The American Sugar Cane League has been directed by the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to undertake a fair and impartial distribution of the newly released variety of cane known as HoCP 96-540.

It has been grown with the understanding that those growing HoCP 96-540 will be paid the price of mill cane plus a bonus, and the League is authorized by the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to charge a distribution fee of $1.00 per ton.

If you wish to order seed cane of this new variety, please fill out the application form found in this issue of THE SUGAR BULLETIN. **NO OTHER FORM OF APPLICATION WILL BE ACCEPTED AND IT MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE OFFICE OF THE AMERICAN SUGAR CANE LEAGUE, P. O. DRAWER 938, THIBODAUX, LA 70302, NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, AUGUST 8, 2003.**

The price of this seed cane is $36.00 per ton, cut and loaded on your vehicle at the secondary station. The cane will be cut with a mechanical harvester. There is no guarantee, expressed or implied, that the seed offered is free of mixtures, diseases, insects, weeds or weed seeds.

For the convenience of delivering and handling HoCP 96-540, the League is requesting purchasers to name three secondary stations from which they are willing to receive cane. The League will attempt to fill all orders from one of the three selected secondary stations. If this is not possible, the order will be filled from the nearest secondary station. If only one secondary station is named and the order cannot be filled from that station, then the order will be filled from a secondary station selected by the League.

On August 8, 2003, all seed will be allocated and there will be no switching of secondary stations.

The secondary stations possessing HoCP 96-540 are:

Parish	Station	Operator
Ascension	Evan Hall	E.H. Planting
	New Hope	Triple M Farms
Assumption	Belle Alliance	Cavalier Farms
	Cedar Grove	E.G. Robichaux
	Glenwood	Robert Falcon Farms
	Little Texas	Tex-Emma
	Lula	Landry Bros.
	Goldmine	Thibodeaux Bros.
	Westfield	Landry Farms
Avoyelles	Newton Cane Co. Inc.	Blake Newton
Jefferson Davis	Diamond W Farms	Kirk Walker
Iberia	Caroline	Herman Walet
	Freyou Farms	Glenn & Wayne Freyou
	Enterprise	M.A. Patout & Son
	Ronald Hebert	Farms Ronald Hebert, Jr.
	Square B Farms	John Edmond Broussard
	Ulysee Gonsoulin	Ronald Gonsoulin
Iberville	Cannonburg	Cannonburg Plantation
	Frank Pearce & Sons	Frank Pearce & Sons
	Laurel Ridge	Alton Landry Inc.
	St. Louis	St. Louis Planting

Parish	Station	Operator
Lafayette	Triple V Farm	Daniel Viator
Lafourche	Home Place	E.G. Robichaux
	Raceland	Ellender Farms
	McLeod	Big D Farms
Pointe Coupee	Alma	Alma Planting Co.
St. James	Blackberry	Blackberry Farms
	Graugnard Farms	Graugnard Fauns
	Martin & Poche	Martin & Poche
St. John	Glendale	T. Lanaux & Sons
St. Martin	B & T Farms	Dane Berard
	Huey Dugas Farms	Huey Dugas
	Levert St. John	Levert St. John
St. Mary	Allain	Adeline Planting
	Bayou Cane Co., Inc.	Jessie Breaux
	Breaux Bros.	Herbert Breaux
	Champagne Farms	Mike Champagne
	Frank Martin Farms	Robert Judice
	Northside Planting Co.	Jackie, Clint, & Chad Judice
Terrebonne	Hope Farm	Ellender Farms
Vermillion	Edward Zenon Farm	Edward Zenon
	Sam Duplantis	Sam Duplantis
West Baton Rouge	Robert Morris Farms	Robert Morris Farms

Up Front With The League *(continued from page 4)*

3. All proceeds derived from the sale of sugar determined to be excess at final liquidation will be shared between the mill and grower in the traditional split, and the grower's amount will be shared on a proportionate basis with all growers delivering cane to the mill. (Rules and Regulations)

Added Axle Bill

1. The second bill will allow for anyone who, within the next five years, adds an additional axle to there trailers will be allowed to purchase the 100,000 pound GVW seasonal permit.
2. Growers and haulers will still have the option, for $10, to buy the 83,300 pound permit for federal highways and the $10 seasonal permit for 86,600 for state highways without adding an axle.
3. There will be penalties for non-compliance.
4. The penalty for overweight is be $.05 per pound.
5. The permit fee will be $100 for 100,000 pound throughout the five years. It is scheduled to be the same after the five year period, but is subject to any legislative increases passed for all licences and permits by the legislature.

Again, this will allow for state highways only. The League will, upon final passage of the axle bill, proceed with its efforts in Washington.

ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Environment Vs. Economy

The news media continues to hype accusations made by rabid environmentalists that Louisiana is suffocating and drowning in life threatening pollutants. Air pollution in the Baton Rouge vicinity is alleged to be so bad that lawsuits were filed to compel EPA to downgrade their classification of the problem from moderate to severe. One affect is that if the standard for photochemical oxidants is not met by the fall of 2003, all gasoline sold in warm months must be "reformulated," which means consumers must pay an additional 20 to 25 cents per gallon. The Baton Rouge "non-obtainment" area includes the parishes of East and West Baton Rouge, Iberville, Ascension and Livingston. This severe punitive action will not actually help the pollution situation, and may even make it worse as people drive the additional 10 or 20 miles to fill-up at stations outside the Baton Rouge area to save money. Environmentalists pooh-pooh explanations by LDEQ officials that the "severe" designation is not justified by the actual measurements nor will any benefits ensue. Environmentalists have the gall to say, that the action will actually help the areas economy. Why so many people actually believe these lies is hard to understand.

Meanwhile, at the State Legislature, a bill requiring LDEQ to impose a $5,000 per ton penalty on excess emissions of nitrogen oxides (No_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) in the Baton Rouge non-attainment area is being promoted. The average sugar mill in the Baton Rouge area emits over 200 tons per year of No_x and 50 tons per year of VOC. Power plants, refineries and chemical manufacturers emit much more of such pollutant than do sugar mills. So it is easy to see how imposing these killer fines is going to help the environment by closing down sources of pollution and putting people out-of-work so they cannot afford gasoline to drive around. Ludicrous!

All of these, and similar environmental initiatives, require more and more demand for funding at LDEQ to implement them, and that agency is supported primarily by fees (taxes). These fees are assessed on holders of permits to operate public and private sector enterprises including sugar mills, sewer systems, commercial and industrial boilers, etc. Permit holders are thus required to bear the cost of DEQ expenditures which have nothing to do with regulating permitted emissions and discharges, such as regulating motor vehicle emissions, littering and promiscuous dumping, transportation accidents and spills, distributing "feel good" propaganda, public information (and misinformation) programs, and counterproductive initiatives such as "environmental justice." The programs that are not related directly to permits should be funded by the general funds of the state since they are supposed to be for the benefit of the public, but now there are little or no state general funds appropriated for environmental protection.

This column has frequently reported on the whopping annual increases in LDEQ fees, including the 15 percent across-the-board tax increase for 2003. When bureaucrats at LDEQ want more money, and they always do, they tell the Legislature that if they do not get it the

environment will suffer, and no legislator wants to be portrayed in the news media as "anti-environmental" nor as being in favor of additional taxes. With state general revenues mostly declining of late, and budget cuts necessary even for education, health and welfare, LDEQ can quietly be given permission to collect more fees and the voting public will not be aware of any tax increase until the system collapses. Unfortunately that collapse may not be as far in the future as short sighted legislators think. Actually it is much easier for sugar millers to understand, observing one or more mill closure nearly every year. The mathematics is simple: less and less permit holders + higher LDEQ expenditures = Unaffordably high permit fees.

One sign of funding crunch at LDEQ is a June 2, 2003 request by LDEQ sent to all water permit holders to please send in early reapplication for expiring permits (along with a check for the required permit renewal fee which is in addition to the annual permit maintenance fee). This is because additional fee money is desired and also because the agency is in jeopardy of losing Federal matching money for being so far behind in actually issuing renewed NPDES permits. Many old NPDES permits have remained in force well beyond designated expiration date because of the default.

Another sign of financial decline is intensified harassment of permit holders by LDEQ's inexperienced inspectors, causing citations to be issued for minor paper work errors and omissions. Many citations involve false accusations perhaps due to lack of technical expertise and comprehension of the regulations. All citations now demand payment of exorbitant fines for each alleged incident. The adjudicatory process has recently been made so complicated that the legal and administrative expense of contesting unjust actions is also exorbitant. This situation is only helping to bring on an early collapse of the system.

The really sad thing is that the original objective of the environmental movement was to clean up pollution - not put people out of business. No industry has done better than Louisiana sugar in pollution abatement. Over 95 percent of bagasse boilers are now equipped with efficient hydroscrubbers, water pollution from sugar mills has been virtually eliminated, cane field burning has been controlled to eliminate nuisance and minimize complaints, and cane farmers now use best management practices to control pollutants in drainage water. The Louisiana sugar industry is not the cause of any real or perceived "severe" pollution hyped by environmentalists.

There is at least one thing that can be done to help the industry's chance of survival in the current economic environment, and that is to give careful attention to minor details. Make and keep every single record required by permits, report promptly any permit excursion if and as required, operate strictly within permit limitations, submit promptly all required reports and permit renewal applications, and ascertain that responsible persons actually do the required work. Not one penny of sugar money should be wasted on fines for paper work errors that really do no harm to the environment itself except waste paper.

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ads in *The Sugar Bulletin* are for dues paying growers only. There is no charge for these classifieds. However, beginning with this issue the guidelines are as follows:

1. Ads must be typed and mailed to The Sugar Bulletin, P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302-0938 no later than the 12th day of the month prior to the issue date in which it will be placed.
2. There will be a 10 item limit with only farm equipment listed.
3. Ads will be placed for two months at a time only. If you wish to run for another two months, please call the League office at (985) 448-3707 prior to the due date.

THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

League Legislative Package Successful
Governor's Candidate List Shrinks

The League took a proactive stand in the legislature this year. Faced with the threat by federal transportation officials of eliminating the special weight permits on interstate highways and increasing pressure at the state and local government levels regarding road damage, the League sponsored two bills to address the controversy.

House Transportation Committee Chairman Juba Diez offered House Bill 768, which will require mills to lock their scales at 100,000 pounds. This has been done on a voluntary basis by the mills for the past two years with good results.

This bill was developed through a series of meetings with farmers and haulers, along with engineering experts from the Highway Department. The State Police assisted in designing the legislation and Bob Odom's staff participated as well. The Louisiana Motor Transport Association was also consulted and all of these interests appeared at the committee meetings to show support.

There were two votes against the bill on the floor of the House of Representatives originally, but those votes were later changed to make the official vote 101 to 0. (Votes can be changed after-the-fact if it does not change the outcome). The Senate floor vote was 29 to 1. This bill is now effective law.

Representative Diez also sponsored House Bill 1154, which provides for the special permit to haul 100,000 pounds. If this bill is finally enacted it will require haulers to add a third axle to their trailers before the year 2008 harvest season if they want the special permit. Studies have shown that adding the third axle reduces the damage by approximately 30%. Transportation officials at all levels have indicated that the 100,000 special permit would be in serious trouble if growers didn't take some step to reduce road damage.

House Bill 1154, at this writing, has passed both the House and Senate but it was amended in the Senate to correct an oversight in other legislation sponsored by the Highway Department. Rep. Diez asked the House members to refuse to concur in Senate amendments, which they did, and the bill is now awaiting a Conference Committee meeting to make needed corrections. No problems are expected and the bill should pass, finally, with the proper language intact.

Governor's Candidate List Shrinks

With the withdrawal of two candidates for governor and rampant speculation about several other candidates, both Democrat and Republican, the field begins to narrow. Former Governor Dave Treen and state Senator Ken Hollis both regretfully withdrew their names from the race. They are both Republicans. Political pundits are speculating on who is next, who will be the first Democrat to drop out, and has the "rich white men committee" helped or hurt by encouraging the Republicans to reduce the number of choices for Republican voters. All of this will be looked at in the next issue.

Memo

To: The Louisiana Sugar Industry

From: Windell R. Jackson

RE: ASCL Mechanical Planter

Chairman of the Farm Machinery Committee, Dean Gravois, has requested that the following information be forwarded to the members of the Louisiana Sugar Industry.

In 1993, the Farm Machinery Committee of the American Sugar Cane League funded David Hearne to build an experimental automatic mechanical planter. The design called for a single row planter with a horizontal drum. In the proceeding years, a number of different configurations of the horizontal drum's size and placement of the planting fingers were tested. These tests found no significant improvements to what was in use by the industry.

In 1999, the committee funded David Hearne to change the single horizontal planting drum to a narrow large diameter horizontal drum with smaller vertical drums on each side (see pictures below.) This design was no drastic improvement to what is now in the industry. The planter has not been used since the initial testing of these changes (1999.) At this time, the planter is on blocks at David Hearne's shop. David's shop is located at 2240 Powers Ave. in Opelousas, LA.

The planter is outside and starting to show signs of rust. This can be seen in the accompanying pictures. In an effort to prevent any further deterioration of the planter and to recover some of the construction costs of the planter, Chairman Gravois and the Farm Machinery Committee has suggested that the ASCL sell the planter, "as is," to the **"highest bidder."** At the May League Board Meeting, the board voted in agreement with Chairman Gravois' suggestion.

If you are interested in submitting a bid for the planter, it may be submitted by either mailing a written bid to ASCL, P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302; faxing your bid to the ASCL Office at (985) 448-3722; or by e-mailing it to Nannette Nickens at nnickens@amscl.org.

Please submit your bid by August 15, 2003. If you have any questions regarding the planter, please give me a call at the ASCL Office (985) 448- 3707. I can also be reached by e-mail at wjackson@amscl.org.

NEW DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide

For Louisiana Sugarcane

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New DuPont™ K-4™ sugarcane herbicide at 4 pounds product per acre provides excellent residual control of annual grass and broadleaf weeds in plant cane. To aid in the suppression of bermudagrass, apply DuPont™ K-4™ to a firm, well-prepared seedbed that is free from clods or excess plant residual. For best weed control, applications should be made over the top of a packed row immediately after planting.

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For more information.

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DuPont™ K-4™ Herbicide:
A Program Approach to Weed Control with a Good Neighbor Policy

DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide: Treated versus untreated. Application made August 2002.

Successful weed control is essential for economical sugarcane production in Louisiana. Weeds reduce sugarcane yields by competing for moisture and nutrients, as well as interfering with crop harvest.

Weed control is most critical early in the life cycle of sugarcane production, and is especially important prior to planting the crop (fallow) and at planting.

When tough perennial weeds such as bermudagrass and johnsongrass are allowed to become established, they can reduce crop longevity, which translates into lost income.

Several growers in Louisiana have experienced excellent success in suppressing bermudagrass and johnsongrass by using a program approach that includes DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide. A sound weed control program gives the sugarcane that initial competitive advantage against weeds that sets the stage for the duration of the crop. K-4™ herbicide, in conjunction with mechanical cultivation and other herbicides, helps to ensure this early start-up advantage.

Here's what a couple of those growers have to say:

John Viator, owner, Sweet V Farms and third-generation sugarcane grower in Iberia Parish. Viator manages 1,100 acres; 850 acres of sugarcane with about 250 acres of fallow. Viator primarily battles bermudagrass and johnsongrass on Sweet V Farms. As a cooperator of Calvin Viator Consultants, Viator sets aside test plot areas to test various combinations of herbicides on key weeds like bermudagrass and seedling johnsongrass.

"We tried about 15 different herbicide combinations on our fallow ground test plot. We used DuPont™ K-4™ and found that the K-4™ treatment was almost as clean as the living room floor compared to the untreated check," said Viator.

Unexpectedly, Sweet V Farms found the K-4™ treated land was moist below the soil surface and in better condition for planting than those acres mechanically treated outside the test site a few rows over.

"Being in the business for 20 years, I would have thought the land that we had worked wouldn't have been as packed as the land that had been set out for 60 days. It was the total opposite," Viator explained. "The soil was so fluffy, just kicking the row with our boots, we found dampness within a few inches in the soil on the land that was treated with K-4™. The K-4™ treated soil was warm and very moist below the sealed soil surface. Just that would make a big difference for planting."

"I've used as many as 10 to 12 mechanical applications in fallow at $5 to $6 per acre for each pass. That cost time and money, and you're still not confident the grass will remain suppressed. It really depends on weather conditions. You can work your land for two months and it can look great, but if it rains for three straight weeks, your land is in as bad a shape as it was before you started."

Viator said taking a chemical approach in fallow allows growers to directly affect the conditions of the soil rather than react to changes as they occur due to weather or unexpected pests.

In plantcane, bermudagrass can be a serious pest. Experienced producers have learned if bermudagrass is present when you start your plantcane, it can affect yields dramatically and can even shorten crop longevity. Viator estimated close to a 40 percent difference in plant population with a 6- to 8-inch increased growth difference when the bermudagrass is suppressed.

"If bermudagrass is present at planting, your plantcane will grow through it, but you're setting the stage for second, third and fourth stubble being bad, and that's your profit," Viator said. "K-4™, in fallow and at planting, allows me to suppress the bermudagrass, minimize mechanical treatments, and reduce the need to add additional fertilizers in later years on the stubble crops. Additional fertilizer alone won't guarantee strong yields, if bermudagrass is still present."

"In addition to added value, K-4™ is packaged in an easy-to-use, 20-pound bag and formulated in a dispersible granule," he said. "Plus, K-4™ has no odor or color to draw unnecessary attention to chemical application. In my area, there are a lot of homes, a school and a church. K-4™ allows me to be a good neighbor and that reduces public pressure and allows me a greater peace of mind."

Byron Luke, 8-year sugarcane producer with Baker Plantation, Inc. Luke farms 1,400 acres together with his father, Gary Luke, in St. Mary Parish. The Lukes are believers in chemical weed control and have been particularly pleased with DuPont™ K-4™.

To prepare for plantcane, the Lukes get their fallow fields up in rows and try to get one good round of tillage on the row and then just leave it alone. Two to four weeks prior to planting, they'll use a Roundup program. This past summer they tried a chemical program of Roundup, Spartan and Weedmaster in their fallow. After this initial spraying, Luke went back with a spot spray where there was re-growth. At planting, they worked it once or twice and once the packer went over the plantcane, they applied a broadcast rate of K-4™.

"We have seen outstanding results," Luke said. "The land stayed clean through the fall and remained clean into January. You could easily tell where I turned the boom on and off on the turn rows."

Before using K-4™, Baker Plantation found they were plowing out second or third stubble as the bermudagrass was choking out the cane. "I believe K-4™ is the most cost-effective product targeting bermudagrass on the market," said Luke. "This spring, we worked the plantcane one time, applied K-4™, and haven't had to work it again until fertilizing. K-4™ reduces tillage and keeps the field cleaner. We're not seeing much bermudagrass pressure, and we can go a little longer and not have to sweat it out."

Luke said he has been able to reduce the number of chemical applications to treat escaping weeds in the plantcane, and they are working it less during the layby period.

"Sugarcane is an expensive crop to grow. Growers can reduce some of the input costs of mechanical treatments and additional chemical treatments with a good weed control program. If you're in an area with good soil and have a good weed suppression program, you can keep fourth and fifth stubble. That's money going back to the farm," said Luke.

In addition to added value and cost reduction benefits, K-4™ has allowed Baker Plantation to treat some areas that are difficult to treat because of the land's proximity to neighboring structures. "K-4™ is a newer chemical, cost-effective, easy to use and less noticeable to our neighbors," Luke said.

Luke recommends new users apply K-4™ on plantcane. Before planting is finished, start applying K-4™ right behind the packer. K-4™ is a stand-alone product capturing both grasses and broadleaves.

"With adequate moisture to activate K-4™, you'll have a clean row, the canes in the ground and all it has to do is just grow," Luke said. "You put K-4™ on it, and the cane will be the only thing growing."

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MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

Cane Preparation – Knifing versus Shredding

We have just completed a successful short course at Audubon Sugar Institute on Cane Preparation and Milling, given by Rod Cullen, one of the Australians responsible for getting milling technology to its present advanced state. He was able to give us much information on shredding, but very little on knifing. The reason, of course, is that the Australian industry relies only on shredding for cane preparation. Knifing was phased out about 25 years ago, following the widespread adoption of chopper harvested cane.

The question frequently arises in Louisiana, knifing or shredding? Louisiana follows Australia's lead in technology eventually. Witness the adoption of harvesting method, Donnelly chutes and underfeed rolls on mills, and short retention time clarifiers as examples. Will Louisiana also follow the route to shredding?

Changes in some of the factors influencing the decision

Whereas in the past there may have been good reason not to consider shredding, things are different now. The following issues need to be borne in mind:

1. Feeding of finely prepared cane to a mill is no longer a problem with Donnelly chutes and underfeed rolls.
2. The advent of (almost) 100% chopper harvested cane means that all the preparation can be done without knifing in a single shredder. It has been proven in Australia (Cullen 1986) and South Africa (Marson 1980) that the degree of preparation ahead of a shredder does not affect the degree of preparation achieved in the shredder.
3. Previous shredders (Searby and Gruendler for instance) are light duty shredders which were not effective. Today, heavy duty shredders are the only option that should be compared with knifing, a vast difference.

Maximum Preparation Index (PI) achievable

With conventional rotation of knives, two sets of knives will generally lead to a PI between 70 and 80. Values in the low 80's are achieved as a maximum. The only way this can be exceeded is to run the knives in reverse rotation, with heavy swing palm knives cutting against a grid plate with anvil bars above the knife set.

Cora Texas has been able to get PI values in the mid 80's using blunt domite tips on the knives. However, the method used to measure PI involves the measurement of pol extracted, not the Brix extracted, as specified in the ICUMSA procedure. Thus the true PI is about 3 units lower then recorded, i.e. the average PI is in the low 80's.

Knifing on its own cannot give the degree of preparation possible with a shredder. The action of the knives is to cut the cane into small pieces, which does not generally rupture the cells.

With heavy duty shredders, values of PI into the mid 90's are possible, depending on the

geometry, clearances and speed of the shredder. In practice, a value around 92 is often the optimum, giving good results without needing excessive power.

Thus a change from knifing to shredding can in most cases be expected to give an increase in PI of 10 or more units.

Effects of higher PI

A higher PI can be expected to have a number of effects:

1. Cane throughput:
   Finer preparation leads to a higher bulk density, which greatly facilitates the feed of the cane into the mill. The nature of the shredded cane with long fibers interacting provides a felting characteristic which also promotes feeding of the cane between the rolls.
2. Higher extraction:
   Overall extraction improvement varies between 0.05 units per unit PI increase (Moor 1974) to 0.25 units per unit increase in PI (Payne 1982). When the shredder was installed at Lafourche, an increase of 0.17% per unit PI increase was recorded (Rein 2002). Thus a 10 unit PI increase should give an extraction increase between 0.5% and 2.5%. The magnitude of the increase is likely to be higher at lower overall extractions.
3. Reduced mill power requirements:
   This is a relatively minor advantage, but works in the direction of favoring finer preparation.
4. Lower bagasse moistures:
   The finer preparation and the absence of "chunks" in the final bagasse enable lower final bagasse moisture to be achieved. Successive grinding of less intensively prepared cane does not eliminate those large pieces.

Power required for knifing and shredding

The average value of installed power for a single conventional rotation knife set in South Africa is 22 HP/tfh or 3.3 HP/tch (here tfh and

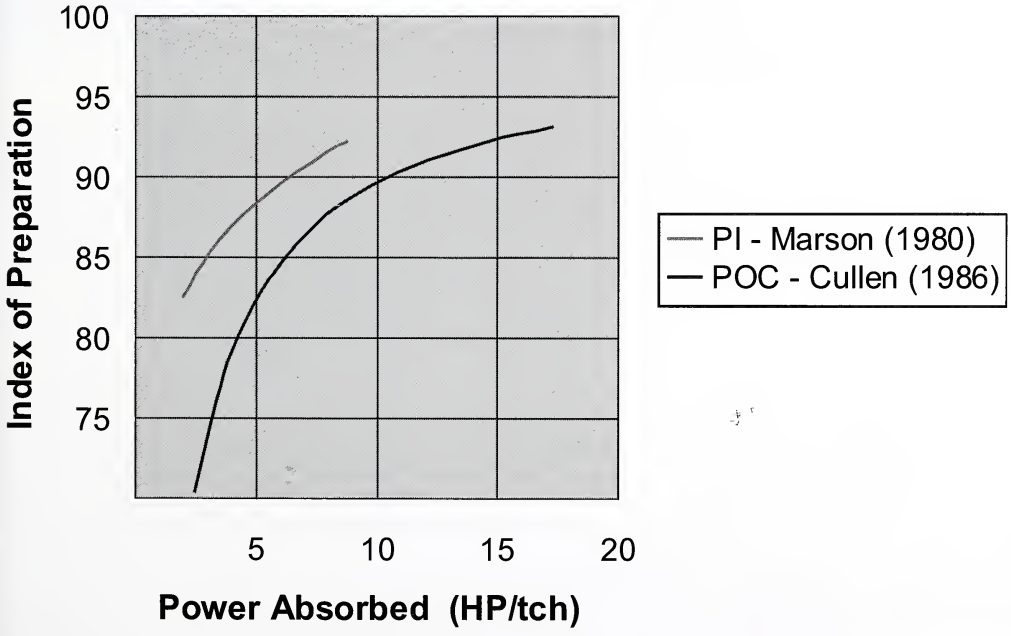

Figure 1. Values of PI and POC achieved as a function of power absorbed per ton cane crushed

Based on this data, a power absorbed of about 7.5 HP/tch is required for a 92 PI. This implies a requirement for installed power of about 10 HP/tch.

Thus it can be seen that a shredder does not require significantly more installed power than the knifing arrangements currently used in Louisiana.

Maintenance issues

In the Louisiana context, one of the important issues is the frequency necessary to stop to change hammers or knives. In this context, the use of hard tips is the key. Domite blocks on shredder tips are expected to last longer than Domite on cane knives, because the shredder blocks can be indexed to provide a new sharp leading edge instead of having to change the blocks. The Australians are working on tungsten carbide tips on shredders which will last a six month season. Good magnetic separators are necessary to ensure that tramp iron does not destroy these hard tips.

A shredder installation replacing two sets of knives has other advantages which reduce capital and operating costs, namely rubber belts can be used instead of steel slat carriers and only one preparation unit and drive has to be maintained.

Comments

There is a world-wide trend to more shredding and less knifing. In South Africa where whole stalk cane is processed, this has lead Reid (1994) to comment: "The role of the cane knife has therefore become that of a device to ensure that the shredder is evenly fed and that no conditions exist that can promote choking".

Hugot (1986) concludes: "Finally, the shredder is particularly valuable from the financial point of view: it provides substantial improvement in extraction, it constitutes protection against stones and tramp iron which have escaped the magnetic separator and it costs only one-third the cost of a mill and returns sometimes much more".

Shredders appear to offer the opportunity to achieve a quantum change in milling performance and at the same time an opportunity to reduce operating costs.

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Better Quality Cane Deliveries through Harvester Modifications

Herman Waguespack, Jr. and Windell Jackson
American Sugar Cane League

A series of field tests and observations to monitor harvester modifications were conducted during the 2002-03 harvest season. Although data collection was particularly challenging since harvest conditions were less than ideal (severely lodged, wet fields) this work represents a "real world" glimpse of progress being made to improve cane quality in the Louisiana industry. Thanks and appreciation is expressed for the cooperation of Frank Martin Farms, Joel Landry Farms, Sterling Sugars, Westfield Sugar Factory, Kerry Morvant, Mike Hinds, Gary Simmons and Mike Duplantis of Cameco Industries, Harold Birkett and Jeanie Stein of Audubon Sugar Institute. The combine harvester tests during the 2002 harvest season focused on cane quality data collected from harvesters that either had modifications to the front-end gathering system and/or had the addition of the automatic base cutter (ABC) system.

I. Row-sweepers.
The first modification observed was the row-sweep front end that was designed and operated at Frank Martin Farms. This project was partially funded by the dedicated research committee in an effort to encourage improved harvester performance in lodged cane. Figure 1 shows the "rotating kickers" on the bottom of the row dividers that are designed to "sweep" the shoulders of each row as the harvester moves forward in the cane. This modification is intended to lift severely lodged cane so that the base cutter can more effectively cut the bottom of the stalks without having to run the base cutter into the soil. Although the picture shows three kickers, which was used for the first observation, a later version tested had four kickers on each side.

Figure 1. Picture showing "kicker" additions on each side.

Table 1. Average Yields from observation (2 replications) with row sweep modified front end at Frank Martin Farms 12/19/02

Treatment	Tons/Acre	Trs/Ton	Trs/Acre	Sediment	Ash %
Row Sweep	41.3	184	7592	9.0	4.0
Unmodified	43.8	164	7209	11.0	7.6

Table 1 shows data collected from two replications at Frank Martin Farms. The data from the combine with the row sweep front end suggests that improved quality cane deliveries were being

achieved. Unfortunately, due to poor harvest conditions, additional samples were impossible to collect. With such limited data, conclusions as to the effectiveness of this modification are difficult to quantify. Hopefully, future harvest seasons will afford more meaningful data.

II. ABC system.

Another modification intended to improve cane quality was the automatic base cutter (ABC) control system, designed by Cameco. The system includes "a computer and hydraulic sensors to maintain the proper basecutter blade height. This is done by comparing the actual basecutter pressure reading to a pre-selected basecutter pressure based on the soil conditions and cane density. The machine is then lifted or lowered to match the actual pressure reading with the desired pressure." Although this system is new to the Louisiana industry, it has been tested in other industries. Several single-row Louisiana combines were equipped with the ABC system and one two-row combine used it for the whole 2002-03 crop harvest. A single row (CHT2500) was used for the tests reported on here. The operator simply switched the system "on" or "off" and loads were tagged accordingly. While the system was off, the operator tried to deliver the best possible cane quality and while it was on the operator was asked to not override the system unless absolutely necessary. The number of row feet needed to load each wagon was measured with an acreage wheel. Tons of cane per acre was calculated using the distance measured and the tons delivered. Each load was core-sampled and processed using normal core lab procedures and juice quality reporting (Trs/Ton, Trs/Acre, and Sediment). The unused, shredded cane from the pre-breaker was collected for additional analysis to report ash % cane. Statistical analysis of the data was accomplished using CoStat statistical software.

Table 2 summarizes data collected on the ABC system at Westfield. The data from Test A was collected a few days after the system was installed. The data suggests that the system was operating too aggressively and did not result in improved quality cane when operated at these settings. Tests B and C were performed following minor adjustments in the system settings and improvements were seen as the system was fine tuned. This system appears to be capable of helping growers deliver better quality cane, but optimal performance will probably be dependant on frequent adjustments as harvest conditions change.

Table 2. Average Yields from Westfield ABC tests (12/17/02, 12/20/02).

Treatment	Tons/Acre	Trs/Ton	Trs/Acre	Sediment	Ash %
		Test A			
ABC "on"	50.3	172	8747	6.2	5.6
ABC "off"	53.0	182	9628	6.0	4.5
	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
		Test B			
ABC "on"	48.8	166	8085	8.0	8.2
ABC "off"	44.8	162	7256	7.2	6.0
	2.8	ns	ns	ns	ns
		Test C			
ABC "on"	46.2	175	8131	6.0	6.1
ABC "off"	45.0	167	7509	9.7	8.1
	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Table 3. Average Yields from F. Martin Farms Combine Modification Test, 1/17/03

Treatment	Tns/Ac	Trs/Ton	Trs/Ac	Sed.	Ash %
Row Sweep Front (1)	32.1 b	201 a	6454 b	8.3 a	0.9
ABC + Mod. Front (2)	35.0 a	202 a	7047 a	9.3 a	1.2
Unmod. CHT2500 (3)	32.2 b	206 a	6629 ab	6.5 a	0.8

(continued on page 32)

Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2002.

Developing Weed Management Programs for Efficient Sugarcane Production, *Edward P. Richard, Jr., Research Agronomist: USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

Weeds impact both the grower and processor by reducing cane and sugar yields through competition for moisture and nutrients, by reducing harvesting efficiency, and by causing crusher and sugar recovery problems during milling. In some instances, growers have also questioned the need for a herbicide at all, particularly in early spring when the trash blanket is still present and at layby when shoot populations of LCP 85-384 are so high that there is hardly any place for a weed to grow. Early research has shown that late emerging weeds seldom have an impact on gross cane yields, and since the cane was burned, on theoretical recoverable sugar levels. With the chopper harvesting of green cane more and more becoming the norm, the potential economic impact of the late-emerging weeds on chopper harvester efficiency (gathering and cleaning) is in question. With the billet samplers, the weigh wagons, and the juice lab at his disposal, the Lead Scientist can initiate studies to answer these questions.

Status and Results of 2002 Project:

Over 25 field experiments relating to this project were conducted during the 2001/2002 growing season. Most of these studies dealt with weed control (johnsongrass, bermudagrass, itchgrass, and morningglory). Included in these experiments were evaluations of CGA 362622, Spartan/Authority, Command, Valor, and Velpar (K4) for use in sugarcane. Syngenta, the manufacturer of CGA 362622 has petitioned EPA for a label for the use of this product in sugarcane. If EPA approves the Federal label, it will be sold under the trade name of Envoke. CGA 362622 is primarily a postemergence herbicide, but it does has some preemergence activity. In studies conducted to date, it has shown some postemergence activity on both rhizome and seedling johnsongrass and itchgrass. When applied in combination with Asulox, this mixture is especially effective in controlling mature plants of these weeds even when the rate of Asulox is reduced. Studies were also initiated in 2002 to evaluate the impact of tillage frequency on crop and weed density and the impact of weed density on chopper harvester efficiency in green and burnt cane.

This researcher is playing a role in evaluating the effects of combine-generated green cane residues on weed and crop growth. Studies, particularly in older stubble crops, continue to show a reduction in yield where the residue blanket following green cane harvesting is not removed in the fall immediately after harvest. We have also conducted studies evaluating herbicides with postemergence activity on grasses as possible sucrose enhancing alternatives to Polado. For 2002, a total of 16 treatments were included in a small plot evaluation. Two herbicides are showing promise as potential ripeners. Additional studies will be conducted with these materials in 2003.

A Molecular Breeding Project for the Louisiana Sugarcane Industry, *Yong-Bao Pan, Research Plant Molecular Geneticist; Tom Tew, Research Geneticist; John Veremis, Research Geneticist; William White, Research Entomologist; Michael P. Grisham, Research Pathologist; Edward P. Richard, Jr., Supervisory Research Agronomist: USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

Each year, the total number of viable seeds from commercial and basic crosses exceeds 500,000. Of these approximately 200,000 are planted in the greenhouse and approximately 120,000 are planted in the field for evaluation and selection. However, seedling selection depends solely upon the selectors' discretion and is often a "hit-or-miss" process. Another obstacle to the frequent release of new varieties is the low crossing rate sometimes encountered due to self-pollination of maternal parents. In the past few years, we have developed molecular fingerprints for most of the varieties currently used in the commercial and basic breeding programs at Houma. During crossing, DNA from both parents is passed into the progeny (offspring). Using markers specific for certain sections of the DNA, we can distinguish hybrids (offsprings containing DNA from both parents) from selfs (offsprings containing DNA from only one parent) or contaminants (offsprings containing DNA of non-parental origin). By discarding the selfs and contaminants before transplanting into the field each year, the breeders are able to evaluate more crosses while still transplanting the same number of seedlings to the field. To further utilize the application of the microsatellite technology in Louisiana sugarcane breeding program, three objectives are proposed: (1) to apply marker-assisted selection to a significantly expanded number of progeny derived from commercial and basic crosses at SRU; (2) to develop and evaluate new more effective variety- and trait-specific markers; and (3) to evaluate methodologies which will allow for increased application of the marker-assisted technology in the commercial and basic breeding programs.

Status and Results of the Project for 2002:

A combination of hot-water emasculation and DNA marker technology was used to develop new *Saccharum* germplasm with *S. spontaneum* cytoplasm. In bi-parental setting, flowers of 10 wild clones of *S. spontaneum* were hot-water treated prior to being crossed as maternal parents to six commercial sugarcane cultivars (HoCP96-540, HoCP01-553, HoCP99-839, LCP85-384, CP89-831, and H96-291). Three sugarcane microsatellites were used to screen all the 1,971 seedlings produced from these crosses. In every cross, four classes (A, B, C, and D) of progeny were identified based upon the distribution of microsatellite alleles. Class A (1,125 progeny or 57%) represents true hybrids to keep. Class C is contaminants to discard. Classes B and D are likely derived from self-pollination and have no value for breeding. Ten Class A progeny from each cross were put into the 2002 crossing program for use as parents. Early identification allowed us to use these progeny as parents a full year earlier than if they had been planted to the field and allowed to go through the normal selection process.

We used molecular fingerprinting techniques to address variety identity issues for both the Louisiana and Florida breeding programs. We responded to a request from the LSU Ag Center to test four sugarcane samples from field plots along with LCP 85-384 using the RAPD and microsatellite DNA markers. Fingerprints produced from these samples were the same as those of LCP 85-384 suggesting that the experimental varieties being advanced shared the same genotype with LCP 85-384. The same marker technology was also used in the identification of mis-labeled field clones of Florida sugarcane variety CP 96-1602 that were severely infected with smut. This smut-infected clones were eliminated and the smut-free clone was advanced as a candidate variety.

The basic breeding program at the SRU was expanded in 2003 to include new parental lines obtained from the World Collection in Miami, FL. We have cloned and sequenced the large ribosomal gene region from 87 wild sugarcane species maintained at the World Collection in Miami, FL. These include 22 clones of *S. spontaneum*, 22 clones of *S. officinarum*, 16 clones of *S. robustum*, 10 clones of *S. sinense*, 15 clones of *S. barberi*, and 2 clones of *S. edule*. DNA extraction, PCR

amplification, and cloning were conducted at Houma, while DNA sequencing were conducted at Dr. Ray Schnell's Lab in Miami. DNA sequence analysis will be conducted in early 2003 to identify sequence variations among the 87 species. DNA variability will be explored to identify new DNA markers for use in hybrid identification of the breeding program.

Several thousand progeny, including F-1s, F-2s and BC-1s that were derived from crosses using Djatiroto (a *S. spontaneum* species) as the female and LCP 85-384 and CP 62-258, were evaluated in the field. Traits evaluated included vigor, stubbling ability, population, fiber/sugar content, resistance to lodging, and response to diseases, borer, and cold temperature. In 2002 crossing season, 14 F-1s and 19 BC-1s were selected for further backcrossing and field evaluations. The progeny from these backcrosses will be evaluated by both DNA markers and morphological traits based on the listed traits to select the better progeny that closely resemble the commercial varieties.

Molecular Marker Diversity Among Sugarcane Parents And Its Utility In Predicting Cross Performance, *C. A. Kimbeng, Department of Agronomy, LSU AgCenter, Baton Rouge, LA 70803; K. A. Gravois, K. P. Bischoff, and J. H. Oard, LSU Sugar Research Station, St. Gabriel, LA*

Progress Report for 2002:

Laboratory space for the sugarcane molecular marker work did not become available until October 2002. Most of the activity for the proposed research has centered largely on the procurement of some of the most basic laboratory equipment and reagents. However, we accomplished a few goals using borrowed laboratory space and equipment at the department of agronomy.

Our eventual plan is to study diversity among one hundred genotypes used in the LSU AgCenter sugarcane improvement program. Because of space constraints (leaf tissue has to be stored at -80 °C until the DNA is extracted), we could only sample leaf tissue from eighty genotypes. We recently acquired a freeze dryer which eliminates the need for storage of samples at -80 °C. Once this equipment is installed we should be able to complete sampling of the remaining twenty or more genotypes.

We spent the remainder of our time learning how to isolate DNA. Good quality DNA has been isolated from twenty of the eighty leaf tissue samples we harvested. Since our program is at its infancy, we started out by trying many published DNA isolation methods. Some methods were beyond our reach because of the lack of the required equipment. One conventional method we used required about three hours per sample and after ten hours of work, none of the samples yielded good quality DNA. The DNA isolates show smudges indicative of a degradation or contamination with RNA. After purchasing some of the basic equipment, we have settled for one non-conventional method that uses a prefabricated DNA isolation kit. This method has been consistent in yielding good quality DNA. This should allow us to complete DNA isolation for all the genotypes by the fall of 2003.

We recently ordered AFLP primers and a DNA sequencing apparatus. The supplemental funding we received from the League will allow us to begin running PCR reactions and DNA gel electrophoresis in the spring of 2003. With continuous support for this project we hope to accomplish objective 1 by the end of 2003.

Weed Control Research in Sugarcane, *James L. Griffin, Curtis A. Jones, and Jonathan D. Siebert: Department of Agronomy, Baton Rouge, Louisiana*

Progress report for 2002:

For the 2001 growing season research was conducted at the St. Gabriel Research Station, the Ben Hur Research Farm, and in Lafayette, Iberia, St. James, St. Martin, St. Mary, and West Baton Rouge parishes to evaluate weed control and sugarcane response to herbicides and reduced tillage programs. This report summarizes research conducted in 2002.

Sugarcane Response to Preemergence Herbicides Applied in Spring and at Layby Significant injury was not observed when LCP 85-384, HoCP 85-845, and HoCP 91-555 were treated with a single application of Valor at 8 oz/A in March or April, or with a single or sequential application of DuPont K4 (a premix of Velpar and Karmex) at 4 lb/A in March or in March and again at layby. In another study when Valor at 8 oz/A was applied with Agridex crop oil concentrate in April or at layby, LCP 85-384 was injured and a reduction in sugarcane and sugar yield was observed. Sugar yield, however, was not negatively affected when Valor at 8 or 12.2 oz/A was applied in March or when DuPont K4 at 4 lb/A was applied in March or April. LCP 85-384 showed excellent tolerance to Envoke (CGA 362622) applied at 0.6 oz/A alone or in combination with Evik. In two layby experiments conducted in St. Martin parish, LCP 85-384 sugarcane was not injured from directed applications of DuPont K4.

Reduced Tillage Research: Experiments were conducted in LCP 85-384 plant cane and stubble cane in Lafayette, St. James, St. Martin, and St. Mary parishes. Atrazine, DuPont K4, Command plus Direx, or Prowl plus Direx or Sencor was applied in March after cane was either off-barred or not off-barred. Sugarcane shoot populations assessed around 4 weeks after application were as much as 12% greater where rows were not off-barred. Weed control was excellent in all experiments, but cane injury from Command was observed at some of the locations. At the St. Martin site at layby soil moisture was greater and sugarcane was taller in plots that had not been off-barred in the spring. In a study at St. Gabriel, soil temperature on the row top within the sugarcane drill in March and April and sugarcane shoot emergence and height were each equal whether or not sugarcane had been off-barred This same response was also reflected in sugar yields. These findings suggest that in fields where rutting is not a problem, tillage operations in the spring could be eliminated without affecting sugarcane emergence, early season tillering, or yield as long as weeds are not a limiting factor.

Johnsongrass Control and Fallow Weed Research: Asulox alone and in combination with Prowl, and Envoke were evaluated for control of 24 inch johnsongrass. By 38 days after treatment, johnsongrass was controlled 70% with Asulox at 4 qt/A, and the addition of Prowl (1 and 4 qt/A) did not enhance control. Johnsongrass control with Envoke (0.3 and 0.6 oz/A) was no more than 35%. Sugarcane was not injured with any of the herbicide treatments. In a fallow area 28 days after treatment johnsongrass was controlled 71% with Asulox at 3 and 4 qt/A and addition of Prowl at 1, 2, 3, or 4 qt/A did not enhance control. In St. Martin parish two experiments were conducted in fallowed fields and excellent bermudagrass control was obtained with DuPont K4 at 4 lb/A and Sencor at 1.5 and 3 lb/A applied immediately after rows were formed.

Residual Effect of 2,4-D on Whole Stalk and Billet Planted Sugarcane: Field studies conducted over two growing seasons evaluated the effect of 2,4-D applied at 1.5 qt/A to LCP 85-384 sugarcane 7, 5, 3, and 1 week before planting (WBP). Sugarcane was planted in mid-September using both whole stalk and billet (18 inch) seed pieces. When 2,4-D was applied 5 weeks or closer to planting, sugarcane shoot emergence and population averaged across planting methods was reduced 5, 7, and 28 weeks after planting (WAP) when compared to the nontreated control. This response was consistent over years, but by 52 WAP sugarcane was able to compensate and stalk population was equal whether or not 2,4-D was applied. For sugarcane height, response to 2,4-D varied between years and only in 2001 at 52 WAP was a negative effect observed when 2,4-D was applied 1, 3, or 5 WBP. Crop injury in 2001 was further reflected in reduced sugarcane yield (at least 11%) and sugar yield (at least 12%) when compared with the nontreated control more than a year after 2,4-D had been applied 5 weeks or closer to harvest of sugarcane for seed. Sugarcane and sugar yield were equivalent for the nontreated control and the 7 WBP 2,4-D treatment in 2001 but 2,4-D application in 2002 did not negatively affect yield. Even though sugarcane shoot populations across the growing seasons were consistently higher for the billet planting system, yields averaged across 2,4-D application timings were greater for billets (18%) compared with whole stalks only in 2001. Because 2,4-D can have a residual effect on sugarcane yield more than a year following the initial foliar application, a 7 week

period should be allowed between herbicide application and harvest of LCP 85-384 for billet or whole stalk planting material.

Red Morningglory Control with 2,4-D and Alternative Postemergence Herbicides: Field studies were conducted to evaluate red morningglory control with 2,4-D, Weedmaster, and other postemergence herbicides applied both over the top and as directed treatments. In a two-year study red morningglory 12 and 24 inches in height was completely controlled 14 to 21 days after treatment with 2,4-D at 1 pt/A, Weedmaster at 1 pt/A, Atrazine at 2 qt/A, Valor at 3 oz/A, and Spartan at 6 oz/A. When red morninglories were 6 feet tall, weed control with most herbicides was less consistent than when applied to smaller weeds. Red morningglory 6 feet tall was controlled 100% 28 DAT the first year with 2,4-D at 2 pt/A and 78% the second year. In the first year Weedmaster at 2 pt/A or 2,4-D plus Weedmaster at 1 + 0.5 pt/A, 1 + 1 pt/A, or 1.5 pt + 4 oz/A provided control equal to that of 2,4-D alone at 2 pt/A. In the second year when herbicides were applied three weeks earlier than the previous year and when weed growth was more vigorous, 2,4-D plus Weedmaster at 1.5 pt + 4 oz/A provided control greater than that of 2,4-D alone at 2 pt/A, but was the only 2,4-D plus Weedmaster treatment to control red morningglory equal to that of 2,4-D at 3 pt/A (87%). Directed applications to the lower 18 inches of 6 feet tall red morningglory plants with Atrazine at 4 qt/A and Spartan at 6 oz/A the first year controlled weeds at least 96%, but control was 23 to 30 percentage points less the second year. In areas where 2,4-D use is restricted by law or where drift is not of concern, viable herbicide alternatives to 2,4-D are available to control red morningglory no more than 24 inches in sugarcane. 2,4-D remains the most cost effective and consistent treatment in late season when red morningglory vines climb sugarcane stalks.

Red Morningglory Control at Layby with Soil Applied Herbicide: Spartan was applied at 4, 5.3, 6.7, and 8 oz/A both to the soil surface after Treflan at 2 qt/A had been soil-incorporated and in combination with Treflan as a soil-incorporated treatment to evaluate red morningglory control at layby. At 53 days after treatment, Spartan applied at 8 oz/A and soil-incorporated controlled red morningglory 80%. However, when Treflan was soil-incorporated and Spartan was applied at 4 oz/A to the soil surface, control was 94%. When Spartan was applied to the soil surface and Treflan was not applied red morningglory was controlled 79% with 6.7 oz/A and 91% with 8 oz/A. Findings clearly show that to maximize red morningglory control, Spartan should not be soil-incorporated and that a Treflan program followed by a surface application of Spartan is superior to that of Spartan applied alone.

Note: Data for all weed control experiments conducted in sugarcane are published in the 2002 Annual Research Report and can be viewed at www.lsuagcenter.com/weedscience under the category "Weed Science Related Publications".

Better Quality Cane Deliveries through Harvester Modifications *(continued from page 27)*

Table 3 summarizes the data collected from 4 replications of three treatments at Frank Martin Farms. This test was conducted late in the season in moderately lodged LCP 85-384 with the same operator cutting all the loads tested. The treatments included the row sweep front end modification (1); the ABC system on a combine also equipped with a Cameco modified front end (2), and a standard combine with no modifications (3). Treatment 2 provided the highest yield of tons of cane per acre and accounted for the best yield of sugar per acre. Although the combination of bottom blade control and front end modification was not significantly better than the unmodified harvester, this treatment delivered significantly more sugar per acre than the front end modified harvester alone. The sediment and ash % cane measurements were similar for all treatments included in this test.

Additional testing of these modifications is planned for the 2003 harvest season. Although the 2002-03 harvest season only afforded limited data, it appears that certain progress is being made to help growers deliver higher quality cane in Louisiana.

Observations on Plant Cane Stands During Spring, 2003

Jeff Hoy and Ben Legendre
LSU AgCenter

For the second year in a row, conditions for planting were often unfavorable during the planting season. Frequent, heavy rains delayed planting and caused standing water to occur on planted fields in many areas of the industry. In Lafourche Parish, significant acreage did not get planted at all, and billets were planted late throughout the industry. In a few cases, billets were planted in January. Wet conditions continued through the late fall and much of the winter and early spring. Finally, the crop had to endure late frosts and cool spring growing conditions. We are continuing to evaluate the performance of billet plantings exposed to various kinds of adverse conditions. Because of the many unfavorable conditions the current plant cane crop had been exposed to, we wanted to know the extent of plant cane stand problems during Spring, 2003. Therefore, we visited farms in most areas of the industry to observe how the plant-cane crop was faring.

We went looking for problems, and we did find some fields with severe stand problems. Weak or nonexistent stands were observed in fields where you would expect to find problems – those that had standing water for extended periods. It did not matter if the planting was done with billets or whole stalks. We know that planted LCP 85-384 suffers under very wet soil conditions, especially where there is a high water table. However, we also saw many remarkable recoveries. It was difficult to explain why cane was able to recover in some fields but not others. The same recipe for trouble with billet planting stands observed during 2002 was observed again during 2003. Billets planted in very sandy soil with a heavy rain occurring shortly after planting had very poor stands, in some cases. Soil compaction is the most obvious factor affecting germination and stand establishment in sandy soils. The plants seemingly never emerged out of the ground in the fall. Depth of cover also is obviously a factor in this situation. Even three inches of packed soil appears to be too much cover in sandy, sandy soil when a heavy rain occurs soon after planting. Persistent wet conditions resulted in weak stands in billet plantings in heavy clay soil, in some cases.

We were able to observe billets planted next to whole stalks at several locations. In these fields, which were planted with billets and whole stalks at the same time, the shoot population and vigor was greater in the whole stalk planted rows. The stand was adequate in the billet planted rows, but the stand in the whole stalk planting was superior. We plan to compare final yields in some of these fields, but this observation is typical of what has been seen previously in research comparing billet and whole stalk plantings of LCP 85-384. In previous experiments, the plant cane yield of billet plantings was often lower, but the stubble crop yields were usually similar to whole stalk plantings.

After reading about all of the problems we observed, readers could get the impression that the 2003 plant cane crop is weak. That is not generally the case, as stands in most plant cane fields appear to be sufficient to produce a good crop. Because of the delays in planting and lodged cane resulting from the storms, many fields were planted with billets, and the good news is that most of these fields are doing well.

The fact is that billets are always going to be more sensitive to any problem that occurs. However, widespread stand problems have not been observed in billet plantings in two years back-to-back with tough environmental conditions. Severe stand problems usually have occurred when adverse environmental conditions are coupled with a planting problem, such as too much soil cover. Everyone now knows that it is essential to plant billets well. Unfortunately, farmers are sometimes forced to plant under less than ideal conditions, and we cannot control the weather following planting. Still, as farmers get more experience planting billets, they will get better at it. Whole stalk planting is a superior system to billet planting. It will provide the greatest yield over time with the least risk, and with a 3:1 planting ratio, billet planting is more expensive. However, billet planting has advantages in reduced labor and equipment needs, and it can be done more rapidly. In addition, healthy seedcane of LCP 85-384 often lodges before planting. As a result, many feel that billet planting will be inevitable in the future. All of the research and field observations indicate that it is a workable system for the Louisiana industry, and the hope is that we can continue to make improvements in it. Practices that will maximize the chance of success with billet planting are given in the accompanying article on billet planting research results from 2002.

Billet Planting Research Results from 2002

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Research is continuing to develop methods to maximize the chances of success with billet planting in Louisiana. During 2002, results were only obtained from billet planting experiments conducted at the LSU AgCenter Sugar Research Station at St. Gabriel. The experiments included one LCP 85-384 experiment in second stubble comparing billets planted at two rates and whole stalks with and without starter fertilizer, LCP 85-384 plant cane and first stubble experiments comparing billet date and rate of planting, and a plant cane experiment comparing billet and whole stalk planting in HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555. No results were obtained from experiments on commercial farms due to unfavorable harvesting conditions.

Yield differences seen among treatments in plant cane were no longer evident in the experiment now in second stubble at the Sugar Research Station. The sugar per acre yields for whole stalks, billets planted at a normal rate, and billets planted at a heavy rate were 5856, 5743, and 5400 pounds, respectively, without starter fertilizer (45-45-45) and 5524, 5719, and 5158 pounds, respectively, with starter fertilizer. No yield differences were detected in plant cane among four dates in a date of planting test (Table 1); however, an early August planting date was not included, as in the previous year. Yield differences detected in plant cane in 2001 (yields were greatest for the August 31 and September 18 dates) were no longer evident in first stubble among five dates in a date of planting test (Table 2). In a plant cane experiment comparing different billet planting rates, yields were lower at the lowest planting rates for two planting dates (Table 3). In an experiment in first stubble, significant differences were no longer detected among the different planting rates (Table 4). Billet date and rate of planting experiments were replanted during 2002. HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555 responded well to billet planting in plant cane (Table 5). Stalk population was higher in billet planted HoCP 85-845.

The results obtained during 2002 were similar to those from experiments in previous years. Yield differences were detected among treatments in the plant cane crop, but differences in yield detected in a prior plant cane crop were no longer significant in the stubble crops. As long as large gaps do not occur in the plant cane stand, the ratooning ability of LCP 85-384 allows it to recover during the subsequent stubble crops. It is not certain whether future varieties will respond the same way. Early results with HoCP 91-555 and HoCP 85-845 are promising. Experimental varieties being considered for release to the industry will need to be evaluated for billet planting tolerance.

It is essential to do a good job planting billets. Billets are more sensitive than whole stalks to any planting problem. Heavy rains during the planting season created problems for billet planting across the industry during 2002. Extensive rain, freezes and late frosts then occurred during the winter and early spring, but most stand problems appeared to be associated with planting problems. The research results from this and previous years suggest that practices to maximize the chance of success with billet planting include: planting long (18-24 inch) billets with a low level of physical damage, planting at a high rate (approximately six running billets in the furrow), providing a well prepared seed-bed, covering with a uniform layer of no more than 3 inches of packed soil (perhaps less in very sandy soil), and providing good drainage and careful weed control. If these practices are followed, billet planting can be recommended as an alternative to whole stalk planting, particularly when seed cane is lodged or labor constraints are a factor.

Table 1. Effect of date of planting on 2002 plant cane yield of billet planted LCP 85-384.

Date of planting	Stalks/acre (x1000)	Tons cane per acre	Sugar per acre (lbs.)
August 23	48.7	44.0	8943
August 28	53.4	42.1	8496
September 17	55.1	46.0	9199
September 28	53.1	45.4	8854

Average values for the different yield components were not significantly different among dates.

Table 2. Effect of date of planting on 2001 plant and 2002 first stubble yields of billet planted LCP 85-384 at the Sugar Research Station.

	Tons cane per acre		Sugar per acre (lbs.)	
Date of planting	Plant cane	First stubble	Plant cane	First stubble
August 3	43.3 b	43.4	8972 b	9006
August 15	44.5 b	41.9	9296 b	8582
August 31	49.8 a	42.6	10402 a	8675
September 18	49.7 a	42.1	9607 ab	8203
September 28	45.0 b	40.0	9200 b	8111

Average values for the different yield components within a crop cycle year followed by the same letter were not significantly different (P = 0.05).

Table 3. Effect of rate of planting on 2002 plant cane yield of LCP 85-384 planted as billets on two dates at the Sugar Research Station.

	Stalks/acre (x1000)		Tons cane per acre		Sugar per acre (lbs)	
Rate	Aug 23	Sep 17	Aug 23	Sep 17	Aug 23	Sep 17
1 billet	40.8 c	38.7 d	34.8 b	34.3 c	6734 b	6442 c
3 billets	47.8 bc	48.1 c	40.0 ab	38.7 bc	8355 a	6913 bc
6 billets	50.5 ab	54.3 b	42.0 ab	43.5 ab	8773 a	8747 a
9 billets	55.7 ab	59.2 a	43.1 ab	47.1 a	8656 a	8068 abc
12 billets	57.3 a	60.3 a	46.2 a	45.8 ab	9525 a	8383 ab

Average values for different yield components within a date of planting followed by the same letter were not significantly different among the different planting rates (P = 0.05).

Table 4. Effect of rate of planting on 2001 plant cane and 2002 first stubble yields of LCP 85-384 planted as billets at five rates on two dates.

	Plant cane (2000) Tons per acre		First stubble (2001) Tons per acre	
Rate	Aug 22	Sep 18	Aug 22	Sep 18
1 billet	56.1 b	46.9 b	48.5	38.8
3 billets	66.9 a	57.9 a	50.4	41.0
6 billets	65.4 a	63.6 a	46.8	42.2
9 billets	65.2 a	58.3 a	45.9	44.5
12 billets	66.7 a	62.5 a	45.8	42.0

Average values for tons of cane per acre within a column (crop cycle year and date) followed by the same letter were not significantly different (P = 0.05).

Table 5. Comparison of yields obtained in plant cane for two varieties, HoCP 91-555 and HoCP 85-845, planted as billets and whole stalks at the Sugar Research Station.

Variety	Treatment	Stalks/acre	Tons cane/acre	Sugar/acre (lbs.)
HoCP 91-555	Billet	54,640	49.4	8786
	Whole stalk	45,725	43.5	7519
HoCP 85-845	Billet	38,910 a	39.1	7901
	Whole stalk	31,380 b	35.8	7037

Average values for stalk population per acre followed by different letters were significantly different (P = 0.05).

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The Sugar Bulletin

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UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

Disaster Assistance - "And/Or" Labeling - Burning Cane

Last October (2002) when your League leadership realized that we had a disaster on our hands and it was time to seek help, little did anyone think about the possibility that it may be this October (2003) that the money might finally arrive. And I guess I shouldn't say that in such certain terms, for today (July 15) as I write this article the actual agreement for delivery of the funds has still not been signed off on by the OMB (Office of Management & Budget). A USDA operative had informed the attendees at the Farm Bureau convention that the sign off had occurred on Friday, July 10. However, apparently that individual thought that the "sugar" disaster assistance public notice had been signed, when in fact it was the program crop's notification that was signed on that day. While I got excited thinking that the log jam had finally been broken with the constant involvement of Congressman Billy Tauzin (3rd Dist), I knew, in fact, that it had not happened, and that caused me to experience some mixed emotions. Hoping that the notification had been signed, but actually knowing it hasn't, leads one to start questioning one's self, as I really didn't want to question the Congressman who had just finished telling me that the deal was not yet done.

Well, if this week is the week that the notification gets signed, and the USDA has to go through its usual publication and comment period, it is hard for me to believe that checks will be to our industry before October of this year (2003). But then I guess it is better late than never.

While the delivery mechanism agreed to by the industry and approved by a working committee and the League's Board may not be a perfect document, it was the best option when it came down to it. The League is aware that all growers will not get money, but then we are getting far more money to many more people in the cane belt than any of the other commodities, if a delivery method is accepted. We fought hard to get language that would not "hamstring" us with a 35% threshold and a per farm cap of $80,000. That is what OMB wanted us to have. No more, no less! I spoke with someone that was assisting a yam farmer file his claim for disaster assistance. That grower had over $500,000 in product loss in two parishes. In one parish he didn't qualify for any payment, and in the second parish he would only receive an approximate $47,000. Total! Realizing that some people won't get any aid is a concern for me, but knowing the opposition we faced going in leaves me feeling good about what was accomplished. And again we owe a great deal of thanks to Billy Tauzin and his staff for "bird dogging" this issue, our entire Congressional delegation in getting the money in the budget, and other friends and allies that have helped us through this entire process. It is taking longer than I ever imagined, and it is obvious by the fact that the beet sugar disaster assistance issue is still not resolved that we may still be connected to them if only by the connotation of "sugar."

"And / Or" Labeling

The Sugar Association Inc. of Washington, D.C. is an organization in which the League holds membership and stays involved with on the health/nutrition issues that affect our industry. While the political front is the most attended to and reported to you, there are issues that are surfacing in Washington and around the world that can have as much adverse impact on our industry as any farm bill or trade agreement. In fact, the obesity issue is of great concern to all food and drink industry people as well as to us. Just like the lawsuits and large settlements involving tobacco, America's trial lawyers are getting very innovative as they pursue their next big target. To say that sugar is insulated because we are an input into food products will probably not get us out of harm's way. The Sugar Association's forte' has always been to base all of its fights on the "science" surrounding the issue. The science is what has distinguished the Sugar Association from our other organization, the American Sugar Alliance.

This issue of "and/or" labeling revolves around the issue where cold drink and other beverage manufacturers have been allowed to place on their container the wording "fructose and/or sugar."

This has been allowed for many years and as those of us in the sugar industry are keenly aware, there is no "shelf" beverage out there using sugar. That brings us to the issue.

The Sugar Association is challenging the allowance by the Federal Food & Drug Administration on the wording "and/or" in spite of the fact that sugar has not been at option taken by bottlers for years. We are concerned with this language, especially now as the press and general public seemed to have melded sugar, HFCS, fructose and other sweeteners into a single category. There is no longer a differentiation between sugar and the other sweeteners, and that is the problem. Sugar is all natural and is not chemically made or an altered natural product. It is a healthy food that the industry has always stressed should be consumed in moderation. In fact, all foods should be consumed in moderation. In the meantime, the issue is that the beverage industry, under the "labeling" laws of this country should not be allowed to use an "and/or" phrase on their containers. The label should state whether the drink contains sugar, fructose, HFCS or whatever. Specifically! This issue is only one of many which we hope will help us differentiate our product from the other sweeteners. Everything but sugar is "faux" sugar, but all of these products and their manufacturers want to convince the public that they are all as good as and similar to our "all natural" sugar. It just ain't the same!

Burning Cane

I guess it is time for my usual reminder about the burning of cane during the harvest season. Please remember the Best Management Practices of Burning and apply these to each and every burn. Be sure to check the weather conditions, wind direction and know, as best that you can, that you are causing as minimal a disruption to other's lives as possible. When possible, try to burn behind the harvest as this burn appears to be the least offensive. While it is known that a standing burn may be needed to accomplish getting all of your crop harvested, try to utilize every day of the harvest to its maximum. There are many days that we have adverse weather during the harvest and the temptation is there to not harvest and deliver cane on that day. But, just realize that a skipped harvest day only puts you and your operation behind and in a catch up mode from that point on. The cumulative affect can cause growers to be put into this situation and to not act as cautiously as needed. Please don't let your operation get into the fast and easy mode. Act prudently and follow what you have been taught. It will serve you well for the long run. Most importantly, "record" your daily information when conducting burns. Record keeping on this matter, you may find, is as important to you as the burn you are getting ready to conduct. Please keep good records. While it may seem burdensome, these good records may some day save or serve you in other ways.

Good luck with the planting and harvest season!

WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Disaster Debate Continues With OMB
Agricultural Appropriations Bills - Mexico
Marketing Allotments Likely For 2003/04
USDA WASDE July Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

In mid-July, debate continued within the Bush Administration about the funding mechanism for allocating the hurricane disaster funds to Louisiana's sugar industry. USDA and the White House Office of Management and Budgeting (OMB) continue to discuss alternatives, with OMB pushing for clear loss threshold limits in line with the beet disaster funding mechanism and USDA supporting a proposed mechanism supported by the LA industry. Recent reports indicate that a 60-day comment period could be required after any announced agreement, possibly delaying release of the funds until very near the end of the fiscal year on September 30.

Agricultural Appropriations Bills

As of this writing, the House version of FY04 agricultural appropriations was under consideration on the House floor. The package includes funding for Houma research at FY03 levels and provides funding to plan and design the consolidation of all research activities at the Houma research facility.

Action on a companion bill in the Senate began in the middle of July, with the agriculture appropriations subcommittee considering the package on Tuesday, July 15, and full committee action tentatively scheduled for Thursday, July 17. The Senate package also includes Houma research funding at FY03 levels, with a $300,000 increase in funding for green cane harvesting research. The plan/design funding is not included in the Senate version, and preserving the House language will be a priority in the upcoming conference.

To date, there have been no amendments offered that attack the U.S. sugar program. Considering the record votes in support of the sugar program during the last Senate battle, opponents may choose to avoid another embarrassing defeat this year. We will, of course, remain vigilant against such attacks.

Mexico

The congressional elections in July failed to clarify the political situation in Mexico, leaving those with an interest in the sweetener issue uncertain about the impact of the elections on this important trade issue. The PRI, the party that has long dominated the Mexican political system, was able to gain a handful of seats while the main opposition party (PAN) lost approximately 40 seats. These two parties now hold approximately two-thirds of the seats. However, the PRD, a third party focused in Mexico City and surrounding areas, gained significantly in the election and Mexico City mayor Lopez Obrador will be a pivotal player leading up to the presidential election in 2006.

What impact will the elections have on the sweetener dispute? While the situation is far

from clear, the election results seem to signal a deterioration of the ability of President Vincente Fox and his Cabinet to act without compromise. Further, the new focus on the 2006 elections makes it unlikely that the two main opposition parties will be predisposed to compromising on critical issues, such as the sweetener dispute with the US.

On the domestic front, the corn interests continue to push for a negotiated agreement, and we will be focusing more attention in the coming weeks on educating corn-state Members of Congress on the sugar industry's efforts to facilitate an agreement. In early July, Representative Ray LaHood (R-IL) asked me to update him on the issue and our continuing dialogue with the Administration, the U.S. corn industry and the Mexican sugar industry.

On a somewhat related matter, the negotiators for a Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) meet in New Orleans in late July for further negotiations on that trade pact. The US sugar industry continues to urge US negotiators to negotiate the sugar trade issues at the WTO and not on bilateral or regional agreements such as CAFTA.

Marketing Allotments Likely For 2003/04

USDA is currently analyzing the sugar supply and demand situation to determine whether marketing allotments should be announced for the 2003/04 marketing year. Imports appear to be well below the 1.532-million-ton trigger. Mexico does not have surplus sugar and negotiations on the sweetener dispute have been at a standstill, so there is no reason to expect a sudden import surge from that origin. Analysts inside and outside of government suggest that current market conditions make marketing allotments a virtual certainty.

What is not so certain is the issue of proportionate shares. In order to implement proportionate shares for Louisiana, the Department must estimate that Louisiana will exceed its allotment. USDA will likely use August WASDE estimates to make that determination. An overall allotment announcement will be completed before that time, but state allotments will be delayed until USDA holds a cane hearing in late August, at the request of some farmers. The cane hearing must be held before promulgating state allotments and company allocations.

USDA WASDE July Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its July World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was unchanged at 8,404,000 short tons (raw value), with no change in beet and cane production at 4,450,000 and 3,954,000 short tons, respectively. 2002/03 total imports were raised to 1,663,000 short tons from 1,623,000 due to a 40,000 ton increase in imports under re-export. Imports under TRQ were unchanged at 1,258,000. This resulted in an increase in total supply to 11,348,000 short tons from 11,308,000. 2002/03 exports were unchanged at 155,000, resulting in an increase in ending stocks to 1,603,000 from 1,563,000 in June. The 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use ratio was increased to 16.4 percent versus 16.0 percent in June.

2003/04 production was decreased to 8,495,000 short tons from 8,595,000 in June, with the cane production estimate falling 100,000 to 4,045,000 short tons due to a reduction in Florida production numbers. Beet production remained at 4,450,000. Louisiana cane sugar production was unchanged for 2002/03 at 1,360,000 short tons, while the 2003/04 projection remained at 1,600,000 short tons. As a result of the higher beginning stocks estimate, the 2003/04 total supply remained at 11,739,000 short tons from June. Exports and domestic uses were unchanged at 10,200,000. Ending stocks were reduced to 1,479,000 from 1,539,000 in June, resulting in a reduction of the stocks-to-use ratio to 14.5 percent from 15.1 percent in June.

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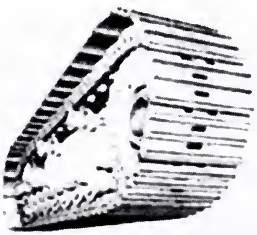

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By Windell Jackson

Some Reflections On The Variety Program

This author has had the privilege to participate in the distribution of every variety from CP 65-357 through HoCP 96-540 from the secondary stations. During this period of time there have been, with the distribution of HoCP 96-540, eighteen varieties released to the Louisiana Sugar Industry. The majority of the varieties released during this time were not widely accepted by the industry for one reason or another. While a few new varieties have occupied 10 – 15% or slightly more of the acreage in the state. Of the 18 varieties released from CP 65-357 to date, there have been only three, during their popularity, which were planted on more than 50% of the state's acreage. These three varieties also found their way into the fields of other cane producing regions. The varieties are CP 65-357, CP 70-321, and LCP 85-384. These three varieties have something other than their popularity in common, and it is not their ancestry. They were all released outside the normal "accepted box" or criteria from which a variety would normally be released. By "accepted box," it is meant that there were some flaws in the new variety's agronomic character that would have normally kept it from being released.

As a variety advances through the selection program, at the different stages of selection, there are nineteen or more criteria used for the rating of varieties. During outfield testing, the last three years of the selection program, the number one criterion is what economic impact the new variety will have on the Louisiana Sugar Industry (grower and miller.) Will this new variety improve the profitability of this cane industry? There are many factors that go into the profitability of a variety. The yield of sugar per acre is the number one factor. How does the variety make its sugar? Does the variety offer high tonnage and low TRS, just the opposite, or moderate tonnage and high sugar per ton of cane? Is the population of the moderate tonnage cane so low that it does not produce a good canopy that shades the row well-causing an increase in the number of herbicide applications needed, and thereby increasing the cost of production and reducing profitability? History has indicated that in their older crop-years, low population canes do not stubble well. The mixture of all these factors must be considered, as well as the costs of harvesting and delivering high tonnage canes with low sugar content.

Stubbling ability of a new variety must be considered at the time of release. Most growers have become accustomed to the longevity provided by LCP 85-384 and are not willing to go back to planting 25 – 30% of their acreage each year. Borer susceptibility is considered, as is disease resistance. There are two factors that must be looked at when considering disease resistance. 1) How severely affected is the new variety itself, will the disease infection become so bad that there will be significant yield losses? 2) If there is no significant yield loss potential in the new variety, then will the variety serve as a "Typhoid Mary?" Smut is not a systemic disease, and all of the stalks in a stool may not be infected. The smut spores are blown by the wind; and after falling from the sky, a few spores may infect fields of seedcane that are not in very close contact to the original field that was the

source of the smut spores. At this time, the industry is not growing varieties which are susceptible to smut, and there are very few smut spores to be blown. If smut susceptible varieties are grown which produce a comparatively large number of whips and spores, disease-free seed plots will be more difficult to maintain. As the amount of spores released to the air increases, there is the risk that the usefulness of high-yielding, moderately susceptible varieties could **possibly** be lost.

Shading ability, grass-control, and herbicide-usage go hand in hand. There are no herbicide tests in the variety selection program. Most variety test-plots are relatively small, and are planted at only a few locations; and for these reasons, much of the information on herbicide tolerance/intolerance is obtained from the 40 + secondary stations. Because there are a relatively large number of stations and because there can be from 0.5 to 3 acres or more of a new variety, and because there are many varied herbicide programs used by the secondary stations, observations from the secondary stations of a new variety's reaction to varying herbicides can be of use to suggest if research is needed to determine if there is really herbicide sensitivity.

Now, back to my original topic. When CP 65-357 was in the testing program, as many of us older folks know, it was dropped due to its susceptibility to mosaic. Because the industry yields had been so adversely affected by mosaic, if a new variety showed symptoms of mosaic, it was dropped from the testing program. In many of the test fields, plots of CP 65-357 were approaching 100% infections of mosaic. Because of the amount of mosaic in the test-plots of CP 65-357, yield data was not taken. After a hurricane, with the exception of one variety, all of the varieties in the test fields were down. At the request of the outfield agronomists, CP 65- 357 was harvested. It harvested very well and out yielded all of the other varieties harvested that year. "The rest is history!" Whether or not the release of CP 65-357 was correct and what effect it had on the ability to release and grow other promising varieties is a discussion for another day. However, as far as making money for this industry, the release of CP 65-357 was undoubtedly correct.

CP 65-357 was released to the industry because it stood up. The next variety that occupied 50% of the state's acreage was CP 70-321. At the time CP 70 321 was released, it was a high tonnage cane, which was somewhat recumbent and very hard to harvest. These harvesting attributes were by no means within the norm for the harvestability for varieties being released to the industry. Because of CP 70-321's yield potential (tonnage and sugar per ton), it was released to the industry. Again, "the rest is history." Because of the foresight of members of the variety committee, CP 70-321 was kept in the program and finally released, even though it did not meet industry standards for erectness.

LCP 85-384 is outside of the box on two counts. Its extremely poor harvestability is count one. Its harvestability is much worse than 321's. Combine harvesters were just starting to make inroads into Louisiana at about the same time LCP 85-384 was released. It is only because of the combine harvester that the super-yielding ability of LCP 85-384 can be maximized. Of the yield increase that came from LCP 85 -384, it is the variety's strong stubbling ability that has had the greatest impact in increasing the state's overall yield. If LCP 85-384 had traditional low yields in the older stubbles (second and third), it would not be profitable to operate combine harvest systems here in Louisiana. Knowing the ability of this industry to adapt, the variety release committee took a leap of faith; again, the variety committee's foresight prevailed when it released a variety for which the industry was not quite ready.

As stated earlier, there were two strikes against LCP 85-384. The second strike was the lack of borer resistance. With the release of CP 70-321, great strides were made in the commercial varietal resistance to the cane borer. Many growers were able to **not** check their fields, and in doing so have no major problems of reduced yields due to borer damage. The industry as a whole was able to maintain a very low- cost borer control program. At the variety release committee meeting, there were those who

advised that the industry could not economically control borers in this new variety. However, because the majority of the committee's members realized the yield potential and stubbling ability of LCP 85-384, it was released under the democratic procedure of majority rule.

In the future, the variety advance and release committees, which are made up of those who work in the variety development program, will continue to take into account the economic value that any and all new varieties can bring to this industry. The committee members are the agronomists, breeders, entomologists, and pathologists who have the most intimate knowledge of the 200,000 new varieties which are in the different stages of the breeding and selection program each year. This group of researchers has but one goal and that goal is to find a new variety. A new variety must have potential to improve/increase the profits of this industry - either by increasing yields or by reducing input costs - and as has been proven by history, the variety committee will step well outside of the "accepted box" to do so.

NOTES ON THE CURRENT SUGAR CANE BORER POPULATONS

D. K. Pollet and T. E. Reagan
LSU AgCenter

The borer population this year is the typical guess situation. In some areas, farmers have sprayed and are getting ready to spray some areas again; some are just starting to spray, and a few others have yet to spray. The aerial applicators are having one hell of a time in getting the sprays applied timely because of the weather, and some are getting backed up on orders. This is allowing for more borer development and expansion of infested areas. This situation makes it more critical that insecticides are rotated between Confirm and one of the labeled pyrethroids (Karate, Baythroid, Asana, Mustang Max, and Fury). We are very concerned about the problem of resistance. We have data to show that the sugarcane borer has the potential to develop resistance to both classes of insecticide. We noted last year that resistance was developing in an area where only the Confirm was used. Should we loose Confirm or develop resistance in a pyrethroid, we would essentially be left with only one class of insecticide. This could create a resistance situation to that material within a short period of time. Because of weather patterns, treatments have sometimes gotten behind; and borer development and spread has increased. Many growers and consultants have already sprayed or recommended spraying a considerable portion of their acreage.

We realize that there are situations in which, because of water bodies or housing and the need for safer materials, the growers would not want to use a pyrethroid. Many growers have planted a more resistant variety in these situations (HoCP 85-845 or CP70-321). Sometimes the ant populations have been affected by the rainfall as well, and the ants may not have been as effective in areas where the fields were flooded. In insecticide application, beware of the water pH. A pH above 9 can have some effect on both Confirm and the pyrethroids. Confirm should be used with a non-ionic surfactant.

Spraying sugarcane borer infestations is critical for the production cane and to prevent infestation of the cane we plan to plant. Last year we had infestations as high as 50-60% in early planted cane that came up after planting in early August. We are also concerned about borer infestations in planted cane, and that will be the focus of the next major entomology research effort.

Memo

To: The Louisiana Sugar Industry

From: Windell R. Jackson

RE: ASCL Mechanical Planter

Chairman of the Farm Machinery Committee, Dean Gravois, has requested that the following information be forwarded to the members of the Louisiana Sugar Industry.

In 1993, the Farm Machinery Committee of the American Sugar Cane League funded David Hearne to build an experimental automatic mechanical planter. The design called for a single row planter with a horizontal drum. In the proceeding years, a number of different configurations of the horizontal drum's size and placement of the planting fingers were tested. These tests found no significant improvements to what was in use by the industry.

In 1999, the committee funded David Hearne to change the single horizontal planting drum to a narrow large diameter horizontal drum with smaller vertical drums on each side (see pictures below.) This design was no drastic improvement to what is now in the industry. The planter has not been used since the initial testing of these changes (1999.) At this time, the planter is on blocks at David Hearne's shop. David's shop is located at 2240 Powers Ave. in Opelousas, LA.

The planter is outside and starting to show signs of rust. This can be seen in the accompanying pictures. In an effort to prevent any further deterioration of the planter and to recover some of the construction costs of the planter, Chairman Gravois and the Farm Machinery Committee has suggested that the ASCL sell the planter, "as is," to the **"highest bidder."** At the May League Board Meeting, the board voted in agreement with Chairman Gravois' suggestion.

If you are interested in submitting a bid for the planter, it may be submitted by either mailing a written bid to ASCL, P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302; faxing your bid to the ASCL Office at (985) 448-3722; or by e-mailing it to Nannette Nickens at nnickens@amscl.org.

Please submit your bid by August 15, 2003. If you have any questions regarding the planter, please give me a call at the ASCL Office (985) 448- 3707. I can also be reached by e-mail at wjackson@amscl.org.

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DuPont™ K-4™ Herbicide May Add Longevity to Your Sugarcane Crop

Suppressing bermudagrass with DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide can improve sugarcane yields and extend the life of the crop.

Brennon Boudreaux is a fourth-generation sugarcane farmer along the Gulf Coast of southern Louisiana. Boudreaux, along with his two brothers and father, farms 900 acres of sugarcane in St. Mary Parish.

Bermudagrass has proven to be one of the Boudreauxes' biggest challenges when it comes to producing a profitable sugarcane crop. Not only is this perennial weed difficult to control, it can rob sugarcane yields as well as shorten the life cycle of the crop when left uncontrolled.

In recent years, the Boudreaux brothers have tried various approaches in their battle with bermudagrass. Recently, they have hit on a very successful bermudagrass suppression program that includes DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide.

"We recently had to prematurely plow out an entire square," said Boudreaux. "We were able to spray five rows with DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide in early February, before it got too wet and we had
to stop. Those five rows were clean as a whistle, nothing but cane. The rest of the square was so dirty with bermudagrass. It just about completely choked out the cane and it couldn't come back. That would have been the third crop. Had we been able to control that bermudagrass prior to the excessive rain in the spring, we could have easily reached five or six crops."

Before the introduction of K-4™, Boudreaux had been using a tank mixture of Prowl, atrazine and Weedmaster. They also had tried a tank mixture of Command and Karmex® herbicides.

"The Command plus Karmex® did have some suppression of bermudagrass, but the treatment was expensive and it seemed to hurt the cane," said Boudreaux. "Our consultant recommended that we try a mix of DuPont™ Velpar® herbicide plus Karmex® (0.5 pound of Velpar® DF plus 2.25 pounds of Karmex® DF per acre to suppress bermudagrass), and it really did a good job. We used the K-4™ packaged material this past spring and so far we've seen excellent suppression of bermudagrass."

DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide is a single product that provides the same active ingredients as a Velpar® DF and Karmex® DF tank mixture.

Boudreaux believes their success suppressing bermudagrass starts in their fallow ground program. "We'll work up the ground really well, breaking up the bermudagrass. We then pull our rows, getting it ready for planting. At planting is when we want to apply K-4™," Boudreaux said. "I'm

running the spray rig right behind the packer. We spray it on top of the row as it's planted.

"With adequate moisture to activate the K-4™ at planting, we have seen little bermudagrass in that plantcane crop in the spring time," Boudreaux said. "In the spring, we try to go early with another application of K-4™ around February, because it's better to suppress the grass before it greens up."

This program approach has allowed the Boudreauxes to eliminate one or two spring cultivations in the plantcane crop, and has reduced the need for additional chemical applications, which saves time and money.

In addition to suppression of bermudagrass, Boudreaux finds K-4™ easy to use. "It's easy to use with no additional containers. It doesn't clog up the tips and we don't have a big clean up after using K-4™," he explained. "With other products we've used, we've had to go back and wash up all the equipment and never seem to get that yellow dye off equipment, clothes and everything else. There's no discoloration or odor with this product, which allows us to apply it without drawing a lot of unnecessary attention to the farm operation. We really like that."

Mike Robichaux is a fifth-generation sugarcane grower in Centerville, Louisiana. Like many other sugarcane growers in St. Mary Parish, Robichaux and his cousin, Bobby Judice, co-owners of Frank Martin Farms, Inc., battle bermudagrass on their 2,184-acre farm. Robichaux estimates bermudagrass can reduce yields as much as 15 to 20 percent. K-4™ herbicide has proven to be a valuable tool in managing bermudagrass on the Robichaux farm.

"Before we had K-4™, we would try to manage the bermudagrass through cultivation and then use Roundup in the fallow," said Robichaux. "In that program, we never could fully control the bermudagrass. In the crop, we would try using the shade of the cane's canopy and then burn back with Gramoxone at layby to manage the bermudagrass.

"Our consultant recommended trying Velpar® plus Karmex® at planting. He put out a small test plot and the results spoke for themselves. We tried Velpar® plus Karmex® on our plantcane last year. It was very evident where our operators decided to skip a few rows, and the skipped rows really made a believer of me. Where the K-4™ was applied compared to the skipped rows was a black-and-white difference. There was no doubt about where the K-4™ was sprayed."

In addition to great bermudagrass suppression, the cane was in better shape as well.

"The cane was much healthier. It was greener and there was no crop damage," said Robichaux. "A good strong cane crop improves yield, where weak stands costs us money if we have to plow out earlier than necessary. We can't go past second stubble where we have a heavy bermudagrass infestation. Before K-4™, there really wasn't any way to effectively or economically treat bermudagrass in the sugarcane and it's too dangerous to use Roundup in the crop."

Robichaux plans to use K-4™ at planting and again in the early spring. "I like to get out there before the cane greens up. The earlier the better, but you can't always control the weather." He also has used K-4™ on a 4-acre, fallow test plot with great success. "The field looks clean," he said. "We're pleased with what we are seeing."

Growers across Louisiana are learning that K-4™ can reduce the need and cost of additional chemical applications, as well as reduce the number of tillage operations required for weed control.

As shown on the Boudreaux and Robichaux farms, suppressing bermudagrass with K-4™ can improve sugarcane yields and extend the life of the crop. Because K-4™ has no odor and is virtually colorless, it proves to be beneficial to sugarcane producers as they continue to be good neighbors to those around them.

For additional information on DuPont™ K-4™ herbicide, contact Toby McCown, DuPont District Sales Manager, 337-794-2194.

# # #

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MILLING AROUND

By Dr. Peter Rein
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

Editor's Note: The Sugar Bulletin apologizes to Dr. Rein for not printing the whole article last month. Cane Preparation-Knifing vs. Shredding is now presented in its entirety.

Cane Preparation – Knifing versus Shredding

We have just completed a successful short course at Audubon Sugar Institute on Cane Preparation and Milling, given by Rod Cullen, one of the Australians responsible for getting milling technology to its present advanced state. He was able to give us much information on shredding, but very little on knifing. The reason, of course, is that the Australian industry relies only on shredding for cane preparation. Knifing was phased out about 25 years ago, following the widespread adoption of chopper harvested cane.

The question frequently arises in Louisiana, knifing or shredding? Louisiana follows Australia's lead in technology eventually. Witness the adoption of harvesting method, Donnelly chutes and underfeed rolls on mills, and short retention time clarifiers as examples. Will Louisiana also follow the route to shredding?

Changes in some of the factors influencing the decision

Whereas in the past there may have been good reason not to consider shredding, things are different now. The following issues need to be borne in mind:

1. Feeding of finely prepared cane to a mill is no longer a problem with Donnelly chutes and underfeed rolls.
2. The advent of (almost) 100% chopper harvested cane means that all the preparation can be done without knifing in a single shredder. It has been proven in Australia (Cullen 1986) and South Africa (Marson 1980) that the degree of preparation ahead of a shredder does not affect the degree of preparation achieved in the shredder.
3. Previous shredders (Searby and Gruendler for instance) are light duty shredders which were not effective. Today, heavy duty shredders are the only option that should be compared with knifing, a vast difference.

Maximum Preparation Index (PI) achievable

With conventional rotation of knives, two sets of knives will generally lead to a PI between 70 and 80. Values in the low 80's are achieved as a maximum. The only way this can be exceeded is to run the knives in reverse rotation, with heavy swing palm knives cutting against a grid plate with anvil bars above the knife set.

Cora Texas has been able to get PI values in the mid 80's using blunt domite tips on the knives. However, the method used to measure

PI involves the measurement of pol extracted, not the Brix extracted, as specified in the ICUMSA procedure. Thus the true PI is about 3 units lower then recorded, i.e. the average PI is in the low 80's.

Knifing on its own cannot give the degree of preparation possible with a shredder. The action of the knives is to cut the cane into small pieces, which does not generally rupture the cells.

With heavy duty shredders, values of PI into the mid 90's are possible, depending on the geometry, clearances and speed of the shredder. In practice, a value around 92 is often the optimum, giving good results without needing excessive power.

Thus a change from knifing to shredding can in most cases be expected to give an increase in PI of 10 or more units.

Effects of higher PI

A higher PI can be expected to have a number of effects:

1. Cane throughput:
   Finer preparation leads to a higher bulk density, which greatly facilitates the feed of the cane into the mill. The nature of the shredded cane with long fibers interacting provides a felting characteristic which also promotes feeding of the cane between the rolls.
2. Higher extraction:
   Overall extraction improvement varies between 0.05 units per unit PI increase (Moor 1974) to 0.25 units per unit increase in PI (Payne 1982). When the shredder was installed at Lafourche, an increase of 0.17% per unit PI increase was recorded (Rein 2002). Thus a 10 unit PI increase should give an extraction increase between 0.5% and 2.5%. The magnitude of the increase is likely to be higher at lower overall extractions.
3. Reduced mill power requirements:
   This is a relatively minor advantage, but works in the direction of favoring finer preparation.
4. Lower bagasse moistures:
   The finer preparation and the absence of "chunks" in the final bagasse enable lower final bagasse moisture to be achieved. Successive grinding of less intensively

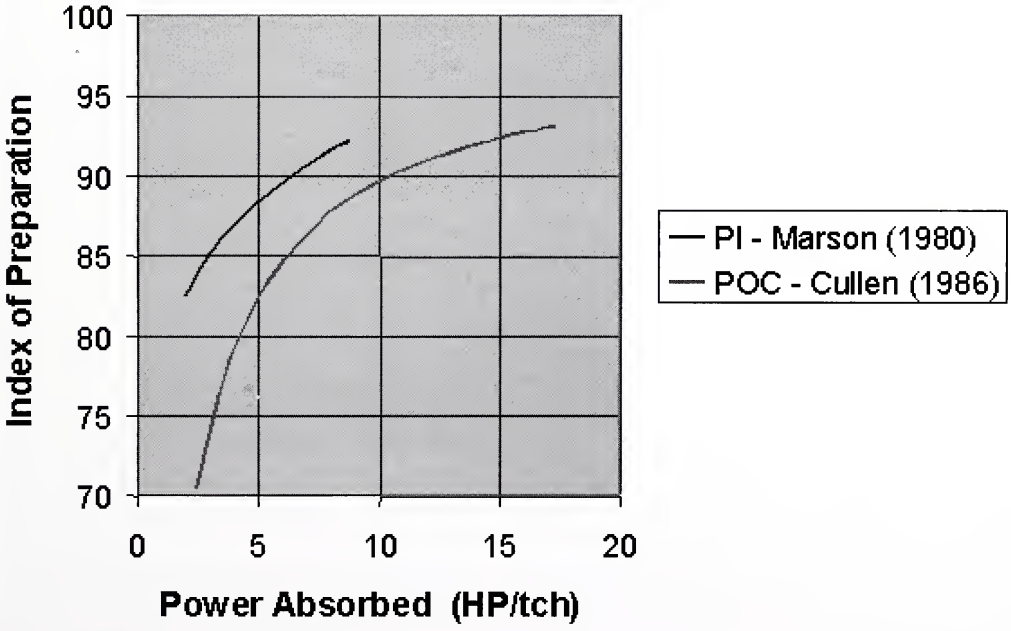

Figure 1. Values of PI and POC achieved as a function of power absorbed per ton cane crushed

prepared cane does not eliminate those large pieces.

Power required for knifing and shredding

The average value of installed power for a single conventional rotation knife set in South Africa is 22 HP/tfh or 3.3 HP/tch (here tfh and tch represent grinding rates in short tons fiber/ hour and short tons cane/hour). In Louisiana, installed power for cane preparation, generally a leveller knife and two cane knives, is about 8 HP/tch. Thus the average figures agree fairly well.

The amount of power absorbed by a shredder depends on the degree of preparation desired. Figure 1 represents the power absorbed in an 84" shredder in South Africa (Marson 1980) and values published for Australian conditions (Cullen 1986). The Australian method for "pol in open cells" measurement (POC) is based on a 10 minute tumbling period, and so mainly for this reason gives numerical values about 5 units lower than PI at a PI of 90. The degree of preparation can be modified by changing the speed of the shredder or the gird bar/hammer clearances or the angle of wrap of the grid plate.

Based on this data, a power absorbed of about 7.5 HP/tch is required for a 92 PI. This implies a requirement for installed power of about 10 HP/tch.

Thus it can be seen that a shredder does not require significantly more installed power than the knifing arrangements currently used in Louisiana.

Maintenance issues

In the Louisiana context, one of the important issues is the frequency necessary to stop to change hammers or knives. In this context, the use of hard tips is the key. Domite blocks on shredder tips are expected to last longer than Domite on cane knives, because the shredder blocks can be indexed to provide a new sharp leading edge instead of having to change the blocks. The Australians are working on tungsten carbide tips on shredders which will last a six month season. Good magnetic separators are necessary to ensure that tramp iron does not destroy these hard tips.

A shredder installation replacing two sets of knives has other advantages which reduce capital and operating costs, namely rubber belts can be used instead of steel slat carriers and only one preparation unit and drive has to be maintained.

Comments

There is a world-wide trend to more shredding and less knifing. In South Africa where whole stalk cane is processed, this has lead Reid (1994) to comment: "The role of the cane knife has therefore become that of a device to ensure that the shredder is evenly fed and that no conditions exist that can promote choking".

Hugot (1986) concludes: "Finally, the shredder is particularly valuable from the financial point of view: it provides substantial improvement in extraction, it constitutes protection against stones and tramp iron which have escaped the magnetic separator and it costs only one-third the cost of a mill and returns sometimes much more".

Shredders appear to offer the opportunity to achieve a quantum change in milling performance and at the same time an opportunity to reduce operating costs.

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A Report on the 2002 Outfield Variety Tests

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The objective of this report is to inform the Louisiana sugarcane industry of the yield performance of varieties harvested in the outfield variety tests during 2002. Outfield variety tests are conducted during the final three years of the 12-year, multistage Louisiana sugarcane variety improvement program. These outfield tests are planted, harvested, and evaluated cooperatively by the Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, and the American Sugar Cane League. In 2002, 25 outfield tests were mechanically harvested at nine sites located throughout the sugarcane belt on sugarcane farms with soils types representative of the region. Planting and harvest dates, as well as the soil type and region, for each outfield test location are presented in Table 1.

Yield data were obtained using combine harvesters provided by growers at each test location and a three ton, single-axle, high-dump billet weigh wagon equipped with electronic load cells to record the weights of the billets harvested from each plot row. Plot weights were used to calculate cane yield (tons/ac). A sample consisting of 15 randomly selected whole stalks was cut and topped by hand from each plot just prior to harvest. The stalk sample was weighed to determine stalk weight (lbs/stalk) and then crushed in a three-roller mill. The expressed juice was analyzed for Brix and sucrose (% cane).Theoretical recoverable sugar (lbs/t) levels were determined using standard methods (2). Sugar yield (lbs/ac) represents the product of cane yield and TRS levels. Information on the procedures used for data collection have been published previously (1,4). Due to unequal sample numbers, the PROC MIXED procedure (SAS 8.2) was used to analyze data. Mean separation was accomplished using least square means probability differences, where a probability level of $P \leq 0.05$ was considered significant. In previous years this report included separate discussions of light soil and heavy soil results, but in 2002 hurricane Lili, tropical storm Isidore and heavy rainfall during the harvest season made heavy soil tests difficult to harvest, resulting in the lost of two tests. Hence, varietal response data were combined over the light and heavy soil locations (Table 2). Data were collected in 25 different tests (eight plant cane, eight first-stubble, seven second-stubble, and two third-stubble) and includes sugar per acre, cane per acre, sugar per ton of cane, stalk weight, and stalk population. For this report, only sugar per acre is discussed.

Since 1998, LCP 85-384 has occupied a higher percentage of acreage than any other commercial variety in Louisiana. In 2002, LCP 85-384 was planted on 85% of the sugarcane acreage(3) and it will be used as the standard for comparison with its response highlighted in bold print in the data table.

The only experimental variety in the outfield test that was harvested in plant cane, first-stubble

and second-stubble tests in 2002 was HoCP 96-540. In 2002, HoCP 96-540 yielded significantly more sugar per acre than LCP 85-384 in plant cane and second-stubble. HoCP 96-540 is classified as resistant to smut and mosaic, moderately resistant to leaf scald and moderately susceptible to the sugarcane borer (data not presented). Based on harvest observations, this variety tends to be more erect than LCP 85-384 and even when lodged, appears to be well suited for combine harvest. Selected from a cross of LCP 86-454 x LCP 85-384, HoCP 96-540 has been approved for commercial release to the Louisiana sugar industry and will be available for distribution from secondary stations in 2003.

The other experimental varieties in the outfield were Ho 95-988, L 97-128, L 98-209 , L 98-207 and TUCCP 77-42. Ho 95-988 was selected from a cross of CP 86-941 X US 89-12 made in the basic breeding program at the USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Unit at Houma. It was introduced to the outfield for testing in 1997 and planted in plots in1998. The variety was dropped in 2000 because of its apparent susceptibility to smut, but data collection in the outfield yield plots continued for breeding purposes. Sugar yields for Ho 95-988 were not significantly different than LCP 85-384 in second and third-stubble test in 2002. There is also interest in the variety because its parental lines do not include LCP 85-384. Hot water treated Ho 95-988 will be reintroduced to the outfield tests in 2003 for further testing. The American Sugar League has also increased hot water treated seed on primary increase stations for future distribution. L 97-128 was harvested in plant cane and first-stubble and was not significantly different than LCP 85-384 in sugar per acre in either crop. L 97-128 has been advanced to the secondary increase stations and could be eligible for release as a commercial variety in 2004. L 98-207 and L 98-209 were harvested only in plant cane in 2002. These varieties were not significantly different from LCP 85-384 in sugar per acre. TUCCP 77-42 was selected from a cross of CP 71-321 X US 72-19 which was made at the USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Unit in 1975. TUCCP 77-42 was evaluated in Argentina through cooperative research between the Estacion Experimental Agro-Industrial "Obispo Colombres," Tucumán, Argentina, and the USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Unit. The variety was released in the fall of 1987 to the sugarcane industry in the Province of Tucumán in Argentina (5). TUCCP 77-42 is now one of Argentina's leading varieties. Because of its success in Argentina and because it is a tall growing, erect variety, it was introduced to the outfield in Louisiana in 2000 for testing and planted at all test locations in 2001. Sugar yields of TUCCP 77-42 were not significantly different than LCP 85-384. Detailed yield comparisons are shown in Table 2.

Of the commercial varieties, sugar yields of CP 70-321 were lower than LCP 85-384 in first and second-stubble. Sugar yields of HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555 were lower than LCP 85-384 only in third-stubble crop. Detailed yield comparisons are shown in Table 2.

Acknowledgments

Sincere appreciation is expressed to the growers who participate in the many different stages of the Louisiana sugarcane variety program. The continued advancement of the Louisiana sugarcane industry is dependant upon the dedication and commitment of these individuals.

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Table 1.

Planting and harvest dates, soil types and regions, for nine outfield locations during 2002

Location	Plant cane		First-stubble		Second-stubble		Third-stubble	
	Harvested	Planted	Harvested	Planted	Harvested	Planted	Harvested	Planted
	2002	2001	2002	2000	2002	1999	2002	1998
Light Soil								
Alma [1]	12/13	09/14	**	08/30	**	**	**	**
Bon Secour [1]	12/18	09/18	11/14	8/24	11/14	09/13	**	**
Georgia [2]	12/06	09/15	12/06	09/19	12/06	08/24	**	**
Glenwood [2]	11/22	09/25	11/22	08/23	11/08	08/26	**	**
Lanaux [1]	12/03	09/05	12/03	09/06	11/13	09/15	11/13	10/06
Levert-St.John[3]	11/18	09/19	11/18	09/01	11/18	08/18	**	**
R.Hebert [3]	12/11	09/27	12/11	09/05	11/07	08/25	11/07	09/24
Heavy Soil								
Allain [3]	**	09/19	12/23	09/27	12/23	09/14	**	**
Magnolia [2]	11/21	10/04	11/21	10/04	**	08/23	**	**

** *No test harvested at this location.*

[1] *Mississippi River Area*
[2] *Bayou Lafourche Area*
[3] *Bayou Teche Area*

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Table 2.

Combined analysis of outfield tests on light and heavy soil locations during 2002

Variety	Sugar/A (lbs)	Tons/A (tons)	Sugar/T (lbs)	St. Wt. (lbs)	Population (no./acre)
			Plant cane crop at eight locations		
TUCCP77-42	7806	37.6 +	208 -	2.97 +	25566
LCP 85 384	**7547**	**30.1**	**252**	**2.18**	**28020**
HoCP 85 845	7193	29.1	249	2.40 +	24560 -
HoCP 91 555	7565	29.8	254	2.27	26954
HoCP 96-540	8538 +	32.8 +	260	2.71 +	24512 -
L 97-128	8096	31.8	253	2.67 +	23825
L 98-207	7410	28.6	259	1.78 -	32742 +
L 98-209	8013	30.9	260	2.37 +	26422
			First-stubble crop at eight locations		
CP 70 321	6407 -	24.5	265	2.15 +	23044 -
LCP 85 384	**7324**	**27.4**	**269**	**1.73**	**32049**
HoCP 85 845	6646	25.7	262	2.01 +	26144 -
HoCP 91 555	7071	26.1	271	1.74	30423
HoCP 96 540	8095	30.6	267	2.21 +	28308 -
L97-128	7432	27.7	271	2.20 +	25264 -
			Second-stubble crop at seven locations		
CP 70 321	4988 -	20.3 -	246	2.01 +	20416 -
LCP 85 384	**7439**	**29.3**	**257**	**1.60**	**36849**
HoCP 85 845	6952	27.0	259	1.80 +	30217 -
HoCP 91 555	7205	27.0	270 +	1.59	34208
Ho95-988	8071	30.0	268	2.08 +	28884 -
HoCP96-540	8528 +	33.6 +	256	2.08 +	32696 -
			Third-stubble crop at two locations		
CP 70 321	6139	24.9	247	2.17 +	23880 -
LCP 85 384	**7678**	**29.8**	**259**	**1.49**	**40732**
HoCP 85 845	6072 -	24.4 -	249	1.95 +	25203 -
HoCP 91 555	6083 -	22.5 -	269	1.62	27988 -
Ho95-988	7787	28.9	268	1.86 +	31498 -

(+) or (-) denotes yields which are statistically higher or lower than LCP 85-384, respectively.

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Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2002.

Improving Soil Tests-Fertility for Sugarcane Production, *Jim Wang, Chuck Kennedy, Howard Viator, Bill Hallmark, and Benjamin Legendre; Respective Departments: LSU AgCenter Agronomy Department and Iberia Research Station, and Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service*

Progress Report for 2002:

On-farm Site Potassium and Copper Study at Parks, LA: A Jeanerette silt loam was selected for this study. Soil analysis showed an initial pH of 5.1, organic matter of 1.0-1.6%, K of 80-144 (low-medium), and Cu of 0.71-1.4 ppm. The field study was conducted on second stubble of sugarcane LCP 85-384. Plots consisted of three 6' by 50' rows with a 4' alley separating the ends of all plots. The experimental design was a Latin square split-plot with four potassium chloride rates and three copper rates. Potassium was applied to the inner off-bar of each plot row on April 11, 2002. Copper was sprayed on May 16, 2002. All plots also received 120 lb/A nitrogen, 60 lb/A P2O5, and 24 lb/A sulfur. All treatments were replicated 4 times. The number of millable stalks in each sugarcane plot was counted. Eight stalks were randomly selected from each plot to measure average-stalk weight and commercially recoverable sugar (CRS).

The results indicated that 240 lb K2O/A significantly increased stalk weight but 160 lbK2O yielded significantly more cane yield and sugar yield. Spray of 2 qt CuSO4/A significantly increased cane and sugar yields. There was no interaction between and K and Cu observed.

On-farm Site Zinc Study in St. Martin Parish: A Dundee silt loam (16% clay, 63% silt, and 21% sand) low in Zn was selected for this study. Soil tests showed a pH of 5.40, organic matter of 1.0%, sulfur of 5.28-6.24 ppm (low) and Zn of 0.26-0.59 ppm (low), respectively. The field study was conducted on plant cane of LCP 85-384. Plots consisted of four 6' by 100' rows. The experiment was a simple block design with 5 rates of zinc sulfate. One rate of sulfur was also used to check the effect of sulfur supplied as ZnSO4. All treatments were applied to the inner off-bar of each plot row on May 2, 2002. All plots also received equal amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus based on soil tests. All treatments were replicated 3 times. The plots were harvested on January 2, 2003. The number of millable stalks in each sugarcane plot was counted. Eight stalks were randomly selected from each plot to measure average-stalk weight and commercially recoverable sugar (CRS).

There was trend towards increased stalk population, stalk weight, cane yield, and sugar yield from 0-4 lb ZnSO4/A but not significant. For some unexplained reason, eight pounds of ZnSO4 caused a significant reduction in stalk population and cane and sugar yield. The reason was not clear; however, we did observe considerable variability in the field even before treatments were imposed on the plant cane.

Lost Tests in 2002 due to Weather Conditions: A field study to verify current soil test for predicting K fertility in relatively heavy texture soil (Commerce silty clay) was conducted in St Gabriel Research Station. The test consisted of five potassium rates. Only half of the test was harvested because of wet weather and the rest was eventually abandoned.

A field test to compare potassium chloride and potassium sulfate was also conducted in Sorrel, LA. The tests consisted of four rates of K2SO4 and KCl each. The producer was not able to harvest the test due to wet field conditions.

Sugarcane Nutrient-Uptake and Yield Response to Post-harvest Residue Management, *Charles Kennedy, Associate Professor, Dept. of Agronomy, LSU AgCenter; Ken Gravois, Coordinator, St. Gabriel Research Station LSU AgCenter; Brandon Grigg, Soil Scientist, USDA, ARS, Soil and Water Research, Baton Rouge, LA; Ed Richard, Research Leader, USDA, ARS, Sugarcane Research, Houma; LA, Richard Johnson, Research Agronomist, USDA, ARS, Sugarcane Research, Houma, LA*

Progress Report for 2002:

About 3 T of residue/ac remained on the field over the winter and into spring. We did not find a significant loss of residue from Nov. 2001 to March 2002 for residue plots amended with UAN, stabilized urea, or molasses. Shoot emergence rate was very similar for all treatments. In late March, the average shoot population was about 57,000 / ac , with the lowest population in the undisturbed residue check (about 51,000) and the highest population in the residue-incorporated treatment (about 63,000). Shoot population increased through spring to populations averaging about 90,000 /ac, but declined back to about 60,000 millable stalks/ac. by August. Plots where residue was removed or incorporated had only about 4 % more stalks than plots where residue was treated or left undisturbed. Crop growth was variable, but tended to be the highest for treatments where residue was removed or incorporated vs. residue treated or left undisturbed.

Yield ranged from 27.8 to 34 T/ac., whole-stalk sample CRS ranged from 171.7 to 191.9 lbs/T and Lbs sugar/ac. ranged from 4856 to 6250. There were no significant differences in cane yield among treatments although the burn treatment had the lowest average and the swept treatment had the highest average yield. The molasses treatment produced the lowest CRS and was significantly lower than the highest CRS obtained in residue-incorporated plots. The molasses-treated plots also produced the lowest sugar/ac and were significantly lower than the residue swept treatment, which produced the highest sugar/ac. Nutrient uptake rate and concentrations in the shoot from samples taken during the season will be determined as processing and analysis occurs this winter.

Assessment Of Louisiana Sugarcane Varieties Against The Mexican Rice Borer, *T. E. Reagan, Professor Dept of Entomology, LAES/LSU AgCenter, Baton Rouge, LA 70803; Benjamin L. Legendre, Specialist, Sugar Research Station, LAES/LSU AgCenter, Baton Rouge, LA 70803; Jose Amador, Center Director, Texas A&M University Research and Extension Center, 2415 East Hwy 83, Weslaco, TX 78596*

Progress Report for 2002:

During 2002, cooperative studies continued with the LSU AgCenter and Texas A&M Research Stations at Beaumont and Weslaco involving extensive pheromone trapping of Mexican Rice Borer (*Eoreuma loftini*) moths.

Four Louisiana sugarcane varieties were evaluated for their relative susceptibility to the Mexican rice borer. Even though the Weslaco cane was never stressed (irrigated at least every two weeks), varieties HoCP 91-555 and LCP 85-384 were significantly ($P<0.05$) more than twice as bored as HoCP 85-845. Under very heavy population pressure and non-irrigated at the Texas A&M Ganado site, CP 70-321 showed the least amount of yield reduction, approximately half of that of LCP85-384, HoCP 96-540, and HoCP 91-555.

Assessment of Different Threshold Levels Affecting Insecticide Used to the Sugarcane Borer, *T. E. Reagan, Dept. of Entomology, LSU AgCenter; Mike Salassi, Dept. of Economics, LAES/LSU AgCenter; W. H. White, USDA-ARS, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA.*

Progress Report for 2002:

Four sugarcane borer (SCB) insecticide management regimes were studied in a four replication randomized complete block experiment on each of four varieties planted in the fall of 2000 at the Sugar Research Station, St. Gabriel, LA. The study conducted during the 2002 season was designed to assess SCB injury and yield loss of resistant and susceptible varieties under different intensity levels (different thresholds) of pest management. The variables were the four commercially grown sugarcane varieties in Louisiana, (1) SCB resistant (CP70-321, HoCP85-845) and susceptible varieties (LCP85-384, HoCP91-555) and (2) four regimes of SCB insecticidal control (based on 5% and/or 10% larval SCB infestation thresholds and a non-treatment threshold).

SCB larval infestations were monitored weekly with leaf sheath sampling. Plots (0.01 acre, three rows each) were treated when infestation levels reached the designated threshold levels set by the indicated treatment regimes. Confirm® (tebufenozide), with the surfactant Latron® CS-7, was tank mixed at the rate of 6 oz/Acre and 0.25% vol/vol, respectively. In addition, due to enhanced experimental variability caused by naturally occurring arthropod predation, especially from fire ants, two applications of the soil pesticide chlorpyrifos (Lorsban®) were broadcast for arthropod predator suppression at the soil level.

When using the 5% SCB infestation threshold (5%), the 5% early and 10% late threshold (5%/10%), or the 10% SCB infestation threshold (10%), differences were not detected in percent bored internodes and percent reduction in sugar per acre. There were different numbers of applications of insecticide required to control SCB infestations that reduced infestation levels below the designated thresholds in this study. The varieties, HoCP91-555 (highly susceptible) and LCP85-384 (susceptible), required two applications of insecticide during the growing season for 5%, 5%/10%, and 10% management regimes. In comparison, CP70-321 (moderately resistant) required two insecticide applications for the 5% and 5%/10% management threshold, but only one insecticide applications for the 10% management threshold. The resistant variety HoCP85-845 required one application in the early part of the season for the 5% and 5%/10% threshold and one application in the late part of the growing season for the 10% threshold.

Evaluation of Precision Agriculture Technologies for Use in Sugarcane, *Dr. Howard P. Viator, Iberia Research Station; Dr. Robert Downer, Experimental Statistics; Mr. Maurice Wolcott, AgCenter Master Farmer Program*

Progress report for 2002:

During the fall of 2001 a thirty-acre field at Renee Simon's farm in St. Mary Parish was conventionally soil sampled using a one-acre grid and measurements were taken on soil

electrical conductivity (EC). All data acquired was geo-referenced using a GPS receiver. The field, with discrete zones of differing EC measurements, was used to determine the relationship between nitrogen fertilizer rate and EC. Four nitrogen fertilizer rates (0, 60, 120 and 180 lbs N/acre) were applied across the field in the spring of 2002 in hopes of matching N fertilizer rate with average EC in the respective zones, speculating that the cane in the higher EC zones (high EC is normally reflective of high CEC and organic matter and heavy texture) would require higher N rates to maximize yield and cane in the sandier soil (low EC zones) would respond to lower N fertilizer rates. Although the highest N rate produced the highest yields in all EC zones, it appears, based on very preliminary data, that less N is required to achieve maximum yields in zones of lower EC measurements. This is illustrated by the fact that the cane receiving the highest N fertilizer rate of 180 lb N/acre in the sandier, low EC zone did not produce as much sugar (6,966 lb sugar/acre) as the unfertilized cane in the high EC zone with heavy-clay soil (7,505 lb sugar/acre). Data analysis is continuing, with special attention being given to evaluating the statistical strength of the spatial relationships (facilitated by the use of GPS) between EC and important crop production traits. Knowing that plant cane often is unresponsive to varying nitrogen fertilizer rates (statistical separation of mean yields of the four N fertilizer rates was relatively weak), we are optimistic the stubble crops in this study will be more sensitive to nitrogen fertilizer and provide a useful platform to evaluate this approach to precision farming. Plant cane data, however, suggest a prescription of variable nitrogen fertilizer rates could be written for fields with differing EC measurements.

Precision Management of Sugarcane using Variable Rate Fertilizer Application, *Richard M. Johnson, Research Agronomist; Edward P. Richard, Jr., Supervisory Research Agronomist: USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

Status and Results of 2002 Project:

Three large producer fields in Schriever and White Castle, Louisiana were mapped. The fallow fields were soil sampled using conventional and grid sampling techniques. For the conventional method, samples were a composite from random locations within the field. Grid sampling was conducted on 1- and 2.5-acre grids using GPS-based equipment. Fertilizer requirements were calculated and application maps were constructed for both fields. The field in Plaquemine was 30 acres in size and the soil pH ranged from 5.1 to 6.4. The recommended lime rate for these pH levels would range from 0 to 2 tons per acre. Similar results were observed on the 49-acre site in Schriever, where the soil pH ranged from 4.9 to 6.4 and the lime rate from 0 to 2 tons per acre. In both cases, nearly half the field would not require lime if the recommendations were based on grid soil sampling, as apposed to the whole field requiring lime if conventional random soil sampling was utilized. A VR rate lime test was initiated at the Schriever site in 2002. Three treatments were investigated: 1) Conventional (non-variable) lime applied at 1 T/A, 2) VR lime from 0 to 2 T/A, and 3) No lime. Plots were 14 rows wide and 1500 feet long. Treatments were applied in early spring 2002 using an Ag-Chem Terrigator application system in cooperation with G & H seed company, Crowley, Louisiana. The field will be harvested using a chopper harvester in 100 foot sections to enable yield mapping. Total yields for each plot will also be calculated to determine treatment effects. A second field was mapped in Plaquemine for a VR lime study. The treatments will be applied in early spring 2003 before cane emergence and be identical to the study in Schriever. Two other sites (Schriever and Patoutville) have been identified for further lime studies. These fields will be soil sampled in January/February 2003 with treatments to be applied to fallow fields in May/June 2003. There was some difficulty found scheduling the commercial applicator to initiate these studies. For this reason

ARS funds were obtained to purchase a VR fertilizer/lime applicator for the research unit. The applicator, combined with a Mid-Tech variable rate controller and Trimble GPS unit, will be used for treatment application in all lime studies.

Our research to date has also demonstrated that significant spatial variability exists in sugarcane yield. In 2001 and 2002, sugarcane yield variability was evaluated for in an 11-acre field on Rebecca Plantation in Schriever. Due to the unavailability of a yield monitor, the field was divided into 215 plots (50 ft by 6 rows) and harvested with a chopper harvester. Plot weights were determined with a weigh wagon equipped with a billet-sampler. Significant variability was observed in cane yield, with plant cane tonnage varying from 16 to 60 T/A and 1st stubble tonnages from 14 to 61 T/A in 2001 and 2002, respectively. TRS varied from 123 to 254 lbs and sugar from 2360 to 13,000 lbs/A in 2001 for the plant cane crop. A similar study was conducted in 2001 and 2002 at Gralyn Plantation in Patoutville, LA in 4th and 5th stubble crops. Plot dimensions were identical to the Rebecca test, although the total plot number increased to 250. In 2001, the tonnage ranged from 14 to 51 T/A, TRS from 100 to 280 lbs/T and sugar from 2680 to 11,100 lbs/A. In 2002, the tonnage ranged from 13 to 39 T/A. Note that TRS analysis was performed on both the Rebecca and Gralyn tests in 2002, but was not available at the time of writing. All soil properties, at both locations, were spatially correlated. At Rebecca plantation all sugar yield and quality parameters were also spatially correlated. At Gralyn plantation only tonnage and sugar yield were spatially correlated. Maps of sugarcane yield, quality and soil properties were constructed and may prove useful in delineation of management zones for variable rate lime application.

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Yellow Leaf Virus in Louisiana Sugarcane

Chris McAllister[1], Jeff Hoy[2], and Gene Reagan[1]
[1]LSU AgCenter Department of Entomology
[2]LSU AgCenter Department of Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology

Yellow leaf is a relatively new disease in Louisiana. A virus known as Sugarcane yellow leaf virus (SCYLV) is the cause of the disease. SCYLV was first detected in Louisiana in 1996. This virus is spread by another newcomer to Louisiana, the sugarcane aphid, *Melanaphis sacchari*. The sugarcane aphid was first detected in Louisiana in 1999. The purpose of this article is to inform you about the current situation with this new disease.

The characteristic symptom of yellow leaf consists of the midrib of the upper leaves on the stalk turning bright yellow. This yellowing may spread out into the leaf blade in some cases, and the upper surface of the midrib may turn reddish-pink. The disease symptoms are noticeable because yellow leaves are not normally seen at the top of the plant. The disease symptoms were first observed in tropical sugarcane growing areas. Leaf yellowing does not occur until the crop is mature. This means that, with our short growing season, we rarely see the symptoms because of Polado® application and frosts. The question is as follows. Can SCYLV infection cause growth and yield reductions in our varieties without showing symptoms?

Dr. Mike Grisham, with the USDA-ARS Sugarcane Research Unit, first detected SCYLV and also demonstrated that virus infection could reduce yield of LCP 82-89 and LHo 83-153. In an experiment now in second stubble, SCYLV infection has not reduced the yield of LCP 85-384. This is encouraging. However, the virus and aphid are here to stay, and the reaction of future varieties is uncertain. Yield losses in varieties in other countries as great as 40% have been reported. This means we need a plan to manage this disease.

The first step is to determine the occurrence of SCYLV in the industry. Therefore, a survey of the Louisiana sugarcane production area was conducted during July and August 2002. Forty-two fields throughout the sugarcane producing parishes were sampled by randomly collecting 50 leaves per field. Fields selected for the survey were first stubble LCP 85-384. The leaves were processed in the laboratory, and SCYLV was detected using a tissue blot, enzyme-immunoassay.

SCYLV infection was found to occur in varying degrees throughout the entire industry (results provided in attached table). High infection levels were detected in some fields; however, no infection was detected in over 50% of the surveyed fields. The relatively low incidence of virus infection across the state six years after it was first detected is an encouraging outcome. If the disease does not exhibit rapid rates of increase, it may be possible to keep infection levels low by planting healthy seedcane. The LSU AgCenter Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab has been monitoring fields of Kleentek® seedcane for the last four seasons and will continue to do so in the future. Once a detection method was available for yellow leaf, Kleentek requested monitoring of their seedcane sources even

though this disease is not included in the seedcane certification process. Yellow leaf was detected in varying levels in all Kleentek stubble fields and 22% of the plant cane fields tested in 2000, the first year of testing. No seedcane was sold from any field where a problem was detected. In subsequent years, little or no SCYLV has been detected. Therefore, we now have a source of healthy seedcane available to farmers.

Since it is not possible to see visible symptoms of infection, it is going to be difficult to evaluate resistance in the variety selection program. We are working to develop methods to select and release varieties with resistance. In the meantime, we believe the availability of healthy seedcane provides us with a management tool that will keep yellow leaf infection at low levels that will not reduce yields, even in susceptible varieties.

Even though it appears that LCP 85-384 does not suffer significant yield loss due to yellow leaf, it is important to keep disease levels low in the industry to prevent problems in future varieties. It is difficult to control something you cannot see, but we cannot ignore this disease. The occurrence of yellow leaf in our industry provides another reason for farmers to continue to pursue an active healthy seedcane program.

Results of a state-wide survey for Sugarcane yellow leaf virus conducted during 2002.

Parish	# infected/ # tested	SCYLV infection (%)	Parish	# infected/ /# tested	SCYLV infection (%)
Ascension	0/50	0%	Rapides	0/51	0%
Ascension	0/50	0%	Rapides	0/50	0%
Assumption	0/50	0%	Rapides	0/50	0%
Assumption	0/50	0%	Rapides	0/50	0%
Calcasieu	0/56	0%	Rapides	13/50	26%
Calcasieu	1/48	2.1%	St. James	1/50	2%
Calcasieu	10/49	20.4%	St. James	1/50	2%
Calcasieu	1/50	0%	St. James	0/50	0%
Calcasieu	1/50	0%	St. John	5/50	10%
Iberia	0/51	0%	St. Martin	0/49	0%
Iberia	0/50	0%	St. Martin	1/50	2%
Iberia	0/50	0%	St. Mary	1/48	2.1%
Iberville	22/49	44.9%	St. Mary	0/51	0%
Iberville	4/49	8.2%	St. Mary	0/50	0%
Jefferson Davis	12/50	24%	Terrebonne	2/51	3.9%
Lafayette	1/50	2%	Vermilion	0/50	0%
Lafourche	0/50	0%	Vermilion	6/50	12%
Lafourche	0/50	0%	Vermilion	21/51	41.2%
Lafourche	32/51	62.7%	W. Baton Rouge	7/50	14%
Pointe Coupee	5/50	10%	W. Baton Rouge	0/51	0%
Pointe Coupee	0/50	0%	W. Baton Rouge	0/50	0%

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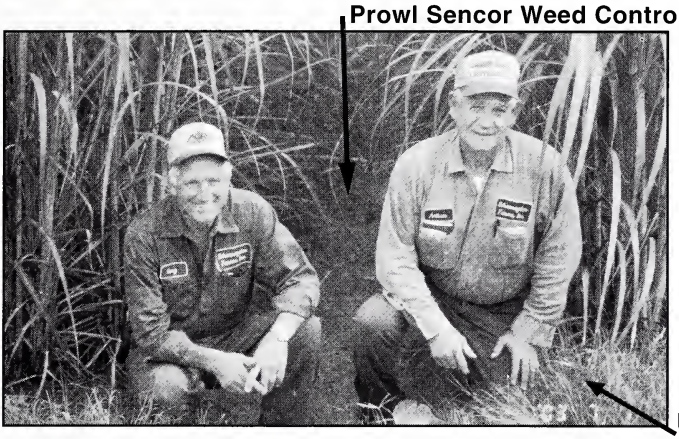

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The Schexnayder's have conducted many test with LSU, testing all sugarcane herbicides. When asked what weed control program the Schexnayder's plan to use this planting season they said, "Prowl plus Sencor." Arthur Schexnayder said, "We plan to use Prowl plus Sencor because of johnsongrass and all the other weeds it controls. It will keep the cane clean until January into February." Gary Schexnayder said, "We have made strides on johnsongrass with Prowl Sencor. We use to have johnsongrass grand mammy. Now we have it under control." The Schexnayder's compared Prowl Sencor with DuPont K-4 this spring and commented, "Prowl Sencor also shows bermudagrass suppression, they look the same!"

For questions contact BASF:

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Estimated Costs of Wholestalk and Billet Planting Methods

Michael Salassi and Jeff Hoy
LSU AgCenter

Over the last several years, a growing number of sugarcane growers in the state have switched from wholestalk to billet planters. Information has been collected from these growers regarding the planting time, labor and seedcane requirements as well as factors associated with using billet planters. This article presents some initial, preliminary estimates of the cost differences that may exist between planting wholestalks versus planting billets. Cost estimates presented here are based on a specific set of field and planting operations. Actual planting costs on farms may be different from these estimates due to differences in specific field operations performed, as well as several other factors. The primary focus of this article is to show the relative level of planting costs for various planting methods and to identify which factors have a significant effect on the level of these costs.

Total planting costs were estimated for four different sugarcane planting methods: (1) wholestalk hand plant, (2) wholestalk machine plant, (3) 1-row billet planter and (4) 3-row billet planter. These four planting methods refer to the type of planter used for the first and second seedcane expansions. In all four cases, it was assumed that the initial planting of cultured seedcane was hand planted. Data collected over the past couple of years has shown that planting ratios differ significantly from one planting method to another. Discussions with growers have indicated that the average planting ratio for hand planted wholestalk sugarcane was about 7.5/1. The planting ratio for machine planted wholestalk sugarcane was about 5.5/1. Planting ratios for both the 1-row and 3-row billet planters was substantially less, at about 3.0/1.

With these average planting ratios, the quantity of seedcane differed substantially between wholestalk and billet planting. Table 1 provides an estimate of the seedcane acreage required to plant 100 acres of mill cane for each of the four planting methods. The hand plant and machine plant wholestalk methods required 1.8 acres and 3.3 acres, respectively, of initial cultured seedcane in order yield 100 acres of mill cane after two expansions. At the lower planting ratios, the 1-row and 3-row billet planters required 11.1 acres of cultured seedcane to yield the same amount of mill cane after two expansions. Although purchase of cultured seedcane is only one of several cost categories associated with planting sugarcane, there is an obvious higher level of actual seedcane expense associated with billet planting. In addition, billet planting results in a noncash, opportunity cost to the grower as more land is tied up with seedcane expansion, thereby reducing acreage of cane actually going to the mill and generating income. With a 3.0/1 planting ratio, this opportunity cost for billet planting was estimated at $160 per acre of mill cane planted. Increases in the billet planting ratio decrease this opportunity cost, lowering it to $68 per acre planted with a 4.0/1 planting ratio.

Table 1 – Acres of Seedcane Required to Plant 100 Acres of Mill Cane

Planting Operation	Wholestalk Hand Plant (7.5/1)[1]	Wholestalk Machine Plant (5.5/1)[1]	Billet 1-row Planter (3.0/1)[1]	Billet 3-row Planter (3.0/1)[1]
	Acres of seedcane planted			
Plant cultured seedcane	1.8	3.3	11.1	11.1
Plant 1st seedcane expansion	13.3	18.2	33.3	33.3
Plant 2nd seedcane expansion	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

[1] Planting ratio

On the proposed advantages of billet planting is the ability to plant more acres of sugarcane in a given time period with less labor, particularly when using the 3-row billet planter. Information obtained from growers indicated that this proposition is, in fact, true. A 3-row billet planter has the capability to plant significantly more acres of sugarcane in a day that the other planting methods. Acres planted per day were estimated to be roughly 8 acres per day for wholestalk hand planting and 12 acres per day for wholestalk machine planters and 1-row billet planters (Table 2). A 3-row billet planter can plant approximately 40 acres per day. These figures were converted to hours per acre in order to estimate machine and labor requirements per acre planted. The resulting planting time requirements were 1.00 hours per acre for hand planted wholestalk, 0.67 hours per acre for machine planted wholestalk and 1-row billet planters, and 0.20 hours per acre for 3-row billet planters.

Table 2 – Planting Time Requirements for Alternative Planting Methods

Planting time	Wholestalk Hand Plant	Wholestalk Machine Plant	Billet 1-row Planter	Billet 3-row Planter
Acres planted per day	8	12	12	40
Acres planted per hour	1.0	1.5	1.5	5.0
Hours per acre	1.00	0.67	0.67	0.20

In order to estimate the total investment in planting costs per acre of mill cane planted, budgets were developed to estimate the costs associated with each phase of the entire sugarcane planting operation. A summary of these costs, both variable and fixed cost, are shown in Table 3. Costs for nine categories of planting operations are listed in the table. A brief description of what each cost estimate represents is presented here.

The $500.10 cost for purchased cultured seedcane (1) represents the costs of purchasing cultured seedcane and loading it onto a planting wagon. Fallow and seedbed preparation costs (2) of $187.35 represents the costs associated with plowing out old stubble and preparing the seedbed for planting. Hand planting cultured seedcane costs (3) were estimated at $227.38 per acre and include costs for opening rows, hand planting the seedcane with 3 walkers fixing rows, closing the rows and applying an at-planting application of K-4 herbicide. Costs of harvesting wholestalk seedcane (4), $79.72

per acre, includes the cost of a wholestalk harvester as well as the cost of loading the wholestalk planter. Cost of hand planting wholestalk seedcane (5) includes the same operations as hand planting cultured seedcane, with the addition of a starter fertilizer application. Machine planted wholestalk costs (6), $199.86 per acre, represents opening and closing rows, machine planting wholestalk seedcane with 2 walkers, as well as starter fertilizer and at-planting herbicide applications. Harvesting billet seedcane costs (7) of $86.00 per acre include the cost of a 1-row combine harvester as well as the cost of loading the 1-row billet planter. Planting costs for the 1-row (8) and 3-row (9) billet planters, $174.11 and $168.44 per acre, include costs for the same row opening and closing operations as well as starter fertilizer and herbicide applications as listed above. The 1-row billet planter utilizes 1 walker fixing rows, while the 3-row billet planter requires no walkers but does utilize 3 billet wagons supplying the planter with seedcane in the field. All seedcane row fixing labor is charged at $25 per person per acre.

Table 3 – Estimated Costs of Planting Operations

Planting operation	Variable Cost per Acre	Fixed Cost per Acre	Total Cost per Acre
	Dollars per acre		
(1) Purchase cultured seedcane	489.75	10.35	500.10
(2) Fallow and seedbed preparation	123.60	63.75	187.35
(3) Hand plant cultured seedcane	170.02	57.36	227.38
(4) Harvest wholestalk seedcane	43.11	36.61	79.72
(5) Hand plant wholestalk seedcane	189.17	57.36	246.53
(6) Machine plant wholestalk seedcane	154.54	45.32	199.86
(7) Harvest billet seedcane	48.22	37.78	86.00
(8) Machine plant billet seedcane (1-row)	128.79	45.32	174.11
(9) Machine plant billet seedcane (3-row)	113.34	55.10	168.44

Using the planting time and labor requirements, as well as the estimated planting operations costs, the total planting cost per acre of mill cane planted was estimated for each of the four planting methods. These total cost estimates are shown in Table 4. Total planting cost investment per acre was estimated at $520.04 per acre of hand planted wholestalk cane and $504.98 per acre for machine planted cane. With a 3/1 planting ratio, total estimated planting costs for the billet planters were significantly higher. Total planting costs for the 1-row billet planting system was estimated at $621.82 per acre, while total costs for the 3-row billet planting system was $614.26 per acre. Although the time and labor requirements for the 3-row billet planter were significantly less than the other planting methods, the low 3/1 planting ratio offset these costs savings. Planting cost estimates for the billet planters were also estimated for a planting ratio of 4/1. At this higher planting ratio, the total cost of billet planting systems were comparable with the wholestalk planting systems.

Table 4 – Estimated Total Planting Cost per Acre of Sugarcane Planted

Planting method (planting ratio)	Total planting cost per acre planted
	Dollars per acre
Wholestalk hand plant (7.5/1)	520.04
Wholestalk machine plant (5.5/1)	504.98
Billet plant – 1 row (3.0/1)	621.82
Billet plant – 3 row (3.0/1)	614.26
Billet plant – 1 row (4.0/1)	535.88
Billet plant – 3 row (4.0/1)	528.79

Based upon the results from this initial cost study of the wholestalk and billet planting methods, a few conclusions can be drawn. First, billet planters do provide an opportunity to reduce planting time and labor requirements. However, these cost savings are small, relative to the total cost of planting, because they only affect the cost of the planting operation itself and has no impact on the acres of seedcane required. Secondly, although several factors impact the cost of billet planting relative to wholestalk planting, the single most important factor affecting the cost of billet planting seems to be the planting ratio. This is because a change in the planting ratio changes the acreage of seedcane required, thereby impacting all planting cost operations. And finally, planting ratios of at least 4/1 are necessary in order for the billet planting system to be comparable on a cost basis to the wholestalk system.

A couple of final thoughts also should be mentioned here. First, as mentioned earlier, the increased seedcane acreage required for the billet planting system does represent an opportunity cost to the grower and the reduction of income-generating cane acreage now used for seedcane is a noncash cost which must be considered. And finally, any potential yield differences due to planting method should also be considered as having a direct impact on the relative economics of billet planting versus wholestalk planting.

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ads in *The Sugar Bulletin* are for dues paying growers only. There is no charge for these classifieds. However, beginning with this issue the guidelines are as follows:

1. Ads must be typed and mailed to The Sugar Bulletin, P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302-0938 no later than the 12th day of the month prior to the issue date in which it will be placed.

2. There will be a 10 item limit with only farm equipment listed.

3. Ads will be placed for two months at a time only. If you wish to run for another two months, please call the League office at (985) 448-3707 prior to the due date.

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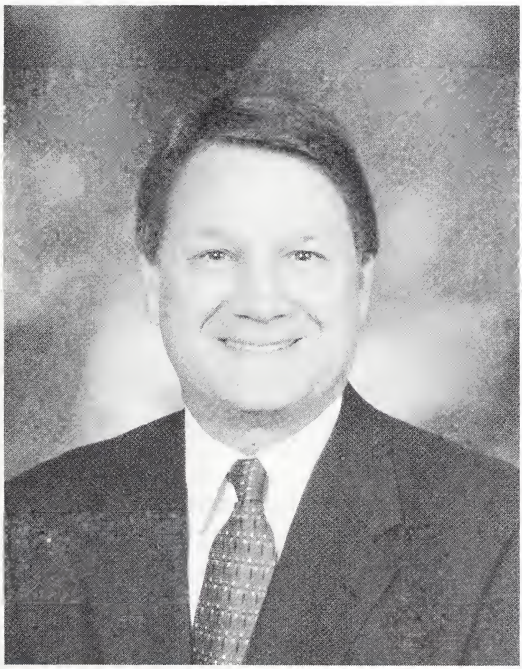

Charles J. Melancon

King Sucrose LXII

The Sugar Bulletin

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Charles J. Melancon
King Sucrose LXII

The Louisiana Sugar Cane Festival and Fair Association announced that Mr. Charlie Melancon of Napoleonville will reign as King Sucrse LXII over the annual festival. This year's festival will be held in New Iberia, September 25-28, 2003.

Charlie Melancon was born and reared in Napoleonville, the third child of Brownie and Joe Melancon. He is a graduate of Assumption High School and the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette with a degree in Agricultural Business. He became the executive director of South Central Planning & Development Commission in 1972 at the age of 25, the youngest person at the time to hold such a position in the U.S. He served in that capacity until 1978 when he resigned to go into private business, Melancon Insurance Agency and a Baskin Robbins Franchise store in Thibodaux.

He served on the Assumption Parish and Louisiana State Democratic Committees from the late 70's until 1993. In 1987 he was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives, District 60, in a special election, and was subsequently re-elected to two terms. During his tenure as a legislator, he was named Outstanding Legislator by the Louisiana Municipal Association and received the Distinguished Service Award from the Louisiana Restaurant Association in 1990. He was the author of legislation establishing the Louisiana Tourism Taxing District which developed and funded advertising strategy for Louisiana tourism, and to this day sustains Louisiana's ability to advertise and promote itself nationally and internationally. Recognizing the need for stable markets for workers compensation insurance, he authored and co-authored bills setting up the Louisiana Worker's Compensation Corporation. He resigned from the legislature in 1993 to become the president and general manager of the American Sugar Cane League, and continues in that capacity today.

Charlie is currently on the board of directors of the Sugar Association in Washington, D.C. and serves as the organization's vice-chairman. Through the League, he is a member of the American Sugar Alliance and the American Society of Sugar Cane Technologists. He is a member of the LSU Ag Development Council where he served several years as chairman, and he is presently serving as vice-chairman of the South Louisiana Economic Council based in Thibodaux. Charlie is also a member of the Assumption Parish Farm Bureau.

The Melancon family's roots in the Louisiana sugar industry began in St. Martinville where his great-grandfather, grandfather and uncle were sugarcane farmers. His great-grandfather on his mother's side was also a cane farmer in Assumption Parish. His father, Joe, was general manager of Glenwood Cooperative in Napoleonville, and both his parents were active members of the Louisiana Sugar Cane Festival & Fair Association for many years reigning as King Sucrose XXXVI and Queen "B" VI at the festival in 1977. Charlie himself became a member of the festival's board of directors in 1980 and was chosen by the festival in 1998 as its honoree.

He is a member of the UL-Lafayette Alumni Association, Ducks Unlimited, Kappa Sigma Alumni Association and Friends of Christ Church as well as many other civic and professional groups.

He has been married for 31 years to the former Peachy Clark, and they are the parents of two children, Seph, and Claire and a daughter-in-law, Cheraine Blanchard Melancon.

Congratulations Charlie on being selected King Sucrose LXII.

UP FRONT WITH THE LEAGUE

By Charlie Melancon

Congressman Billy Tauzin
Bilateral Trade Agreements
King Sucrose LXII

The past several months have been quite hectic with the disaster assistance matter being an almost daily work in progress. During the past two months I have had the occasion to be in communication, almost daily, with a young man named James White. James is from the eastern shore of Maryland and is Congressman Billy Tauzin's Ag L.A. (Legislative Assistant). When I say that this young man is tenacious, it may be an understatement. While the USDA had signed off on the delivery mechanism requested by the Louisiana sugar industry, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) was not to be an easy egg to crack. For the better part of two months, Congressman Tauzin and his able staffer, James White, dogged the people who were determined to give the industry our money, but in a way very different from that which the industry had requested. During that time, I and others in the League's leadership received calls from growers and millers wanting to know "why haven't we gotten the money, yet?" One grower even called and suggested that the League was unable to get the money and asked for names of people in Washington to call. I suggested if he knew the President, he might try him but Congressman Tauzin and James White indicated that they would wrestle this matter until they got it resolved. And folks, that is what they did. It literally took two months of daily sessions with the folks at OMB, with calls for additional information and data on a regular basis. What the OMB signed off on at the end of this two-month episode was not exactly what had been asked for by the industry, but it was a quantum leap away from where they wanted to take you. That is, a 35% eligibility threshold before qualifying to get "any" disaster money. While what we will receive will cut some very deserving growers out of the money, the next option would have been to take OMB to court and that would have meant, at best, no money for disaster relief for anyone in Louisiana for at least another year. And, we knew that the industry needed the money, NOW!

As I have mentioned in many articles in the past about legislative actions and involvement in the governmental process, "it is a process and processes are not always fast moving." We regret the amount of time involved in delivering this disaster assistance to you, but it is not the fault of your League or any of your Congressional delegation. In fact, it is because of our steadfast involvement that it is forthcoming. OMB's job is to be the watchdog of government spending, and buddy, were they watching this one! Again, many thanks to Congressman Billy Tauzin and his "ace" staffer, James White. Now that their part in this process is completed, they may even have some time available for dealing with the northeast's power blackouts, maybe do a little work on getting the nation some good energy legislation enacted, and who knows, they may even have a little time to handle some of their other constituent's problems in between. Billy, we thank you and your able staff for your good work!

Bilateral Trade Agreements

As if we don't have enough issues to deal with on a daily basis that we have added a big one, and it is right up there on the front burner and turned on high. The Bush administration, since receiving the TPA (Trade Promotion Authority) from the Congress has been moving forward at what seems like blistering speed to try and sign up as many countries as possible on trade agreements. With all of this haste, the concern of the US and Louisiana sugar industry is that we don't get another NAFTA. I mean, really! We have spent more time renegotiating the NAFTA sugar side letter since it passed then was spent by our government in their initial negotiations prior to NAFTA's passage by the Congress in 1994. We are working hard to try to convince this administration that we can't continue to negotiate multiple agreements with every sugar producing country that comes along and still expect to have any bargaining power, or leverage, to negotiate at the WTO level. We are hopeful that we will be able to make our point in the final analysis. In the meantime, Don Phillips of the ASA (American Sugar Alliance) and I will make a presentation to the members of the New Orleans World Trade Center next week (August 26) about our position on these bilateral agreements and the other FTA's presently being negotiated by our government. There is a gentleman at the WTC N.O. named Eugene Schreiber. During the NAFTA negotiations, and when I had first come to the League, he and I were paired off on radio and TV talk shows to discuss the pros and cons of the NAFTA. Well, after quickly coming to understand that the sugar industry was not opposed to NAFTA per se', but were concerned with the bad "deal" contained in the NAFTA for sugar, Gene became a friend and proponent of our industry and allowed me to make presentations to the WTC Board and others to explain our situation and position.

Well, Gene has come forward again at this time when the sugar industry has grave concerns with CAFTA, MERCOSUR, and other FTA's looming on the near horizon. He is allowing our industry to have access to his membership, to inform them of our concerns, which WTC association in the past provided some understanding and support that was much needed at the time. Gene recognized the importance of our industry to the health, welfare and economic well being of this state, and wishes for his membership and the import / export community to better understand our plight. Gene's open mindedness allowed this industry to build some coalitions a number of years back, outside the sugar belt, and he has again afforded us an opportunity during this new period in time for trade policy. We are hopeful that our "city" folks and friends will again comprehend our situation and support our efforts.

King Sucrose LXII

As Danny Viator indicated at the festival press conference last week, to announce this year's King Sucrose, he understood that the new king was somewhat "cun-ni" when he was a young boy growing up. And to that I had to confess that my Mother, Brownie, prayed daily to St. Jude who in our house was known as the Patron Saint for Loss Causes. Mom also did the novenas, weekly if not daily, to the Mother of Perpetual Help. I guess it may have worked!

When I was elected to the legislature in 1987, several months after Dad passed away, I felt that he would have been proud of me for that achievement, especially since he loved politics so much himself. Then, in 1993, the year I became General Manager of the League, I knew, in my heart, that both Mom and Dad would have tremendous pride in knowing that I had become a part of the Louisiana sugar family of which they were so proud, and an industry that was always an integral part of our family. I guess my only disappointment is that neither of my parents were alive to share last Saturday's announcement of my being named King Sucrose. Mom would have surely figured that her long continuous praying had done some good. Finally!

But, to them and the Louisiana sugar industry, please know that I have always taken great pride in being a part of this great industry, and for that matter, this great sugar family. I anxiously look forward to the festival weekend of September 25-28, 2003. I realize that many of you will be in grinding and that it is not easy to get away from the farm at this time of year, but I would hope that you might get a chance to at least ride

over to New Iberia for a couple of hours, or for one day, and see the good folks of New Iberia and Iberia Parish celebrate our great industry. We really do owe the City, the Parish, their citizens and the Festival and Fair Association a debt of gratitude for putting on such an event that honors our industry. I truly hope we will see you and your family at the fair, a parade, the livestock show or at some other event on Festival weekend. And, please know how honored and humbled I am to have been asked to serve as King Sucrose!

Hi Sugar!
Hope to see you in New Iberia on the weekend of September 25-28, 2003.

NOTICE

Laurel Grove Enterprises, Inc. is a land holding company which owns agricultural lands located in Lafourche and Assumption Parishes. From time to time, the Board of Directors of the corporation has been approached by parties interested in acquiring all or part of the land holdings of the company.

At this time, Laurel Grove Enterprises, Inc. gives notice that it will receive no later than September 30, 2003, proposals from parties who are interested in acquiring the land holdings of the enterprise. The Board of Dirctors of the corporation reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or in part, any proposal. The Board of Directors will not consider any proposal with a purchase price below $5,500,000.00 on proposed acquisitions of all lands.

Parties interested in making a proposal on any individual tract of land, may do so. Such proposals, however, will only be considered on acreage for whole plantations. No proposals will be considered for anything less than the entire acreage of each plantation. Available on request, parties making such proposals should bear in mind the pro-rata proportion of each plantation to the $5,500,000.00 minimum purchase price of the whole.

Any proposal should not include mineral rights, but should include all improvements to the land owned by Laurel Grove Enterprises, Inc. If a proposal is accepted by the Board of Directors, it will be subject to shareholder approval prior to any binding agreement being issued. Any accepted transaction must be completed within 180 days of shareholder approval.

This notice is not an offer of sale and the company reserves the right to refuse or reject, in whole or in part, any proposal received.

For further information you may contact the corporation at **2621 Highway 304, Thibodaux, Louisiana 70302**

Wiltz Duplantis
President
Laurel Grove Enterprises, Inc.

WASHINGTON UPDATE

By Don Wallace

Sweetener Symposium
Agricultural Appropriations Bills
WTO Trade Negotiations Pick Up Steam
2003/04 OAQ And Marketing Allotments Announced
USDA WASDE August Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The 20th International Sweetener Symposium was held in Blaine, Washington on August 2-6, 2003. Various panels included discussions on trade negotiations, including discussions of the potential harm to the US sweetener industry from the many negotiating venues. Rep. Charles Stenholm (D-TX) and Rep. Eliot Engle (D-NY) told participants that sugar trade negotiations need to be reserved for the WTO negotiating table rather than handled in the various bilateral and regional negotiations, while ASA's Don Phillips and American Sugarbeet Growers Association's Luther Markwart focused specifically on the elements of the various trade talks that threaten US sweetener interests. Jim Wiesemeyer of the Sparks Companies was complimentary of the sweetener industry for its effective use of political access on the domestic and trade policy trade fronts. Wiesemeyer provided some interesting insights into the political situation affecting US agriculture and trade policy.

Agricultural Appropriations Bills

The House approved its version of the 2004 agricultural appropriations package on July 14 and awaits final Senate action. The Senate agricultural appropriations subcommittee approved its appropriations package on July 15, with full committee approval following on July 17, but the full Senate has yet to take up the measure.

Regarding funding for Houma, the House package contains all funding requested while the Senate package currently does not contain the funding for design of new research facilities.

WTO Trade Negotiations Pick Up Steam

The US and EU announced an agreement on a framework for negotiating on the issues of export subsidies/credits, market access and domestic support in early August, creating new impetus for negotiators and ministers preparing for the mid-September WTO ministerial meeting in Cancun. Other nations and coalition groups began offering new draft positions in Geneva, based in part on an acceptance of the US/EU framework as a basis for negotiations. Trade officials do not expect much additional specificity about the US/EU proposal or the Harbinson text (the broad outline for negotiations put forward earlier this year). ASCL will be well represented at the Cancun meeting, with Charles Thibaut, Jackie Theriot and myself serving as official representatives of the League and Charlie Melancon and Macon Edwards

participating as observers an advisor on behalf of the League.

2003/04 OAQ And Marketing Allotments Announced

In mid-August, USDA announced that the 2003/04 Overall Allotment Quantity would be at 8,550,000 short tons (raw value), with the beet sector allocated 4,647,000 short tons and the cane sector allocated 3,903,000 short tons. The OAQ, higher and less conservative than last year's initial numbers, results in a stocks to use ratio of 15.1 percent, based on the August supply and demand numbers (below). At the request of some Louisiana growers, USDA will convene a hearing on August 25 to receive comments on establishing sugarcane state allotments and processor allocations for the 2003 year.

USDA WASDE August Report on US Sugar Supply and Use Released

The USDA released its August World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report for sugar supply and use. Projected U.S. sugar production for fiscal year 2002/03 was reduced slightly to 8,402,000 short tons (raw value) from 8,404,000 tons in July. The 2002/03 beet production estimate was lowered to 4,416,000 from 4,450,000 short tons last month, while cane production was increased to 3,986,000 from 3,954,000 short tons in July, due in part to a 22,000 ton increase in the Louisiana production estimate. 2002/03 total imports were tweaked upward to 1,664,000 short tons from 1,663,000 last month. Imports under TRQ were lowered to 1,239,000 short tons from July's 1,258,000. Total supply was estimated at 11,347,000 short tons from 11,348,000 in July. 2002/03 exports were lowered to 135,000 short tons from 155,000. Lower TRQ imports were offset by higher imports through the re-export program, while lower exports were offset by higher deliverables to users, resulting in a slight decrease in ending stocks to 1,602,000 from 1,603,000 July. The 2002/03 ending stocks-to-use ratio was unchanged at 16.4 percent.

2003/04 production was increased to 8,885,000 short tons from 8,495,000 in June, with the cane production estimate raised to 4,226,000 short tons from 4,045,000. Beet production was increased to 4,450,000 short tons from 4,450,000 in July. Louisiana cane sugar production was increased to 1,628,000 short tons from 1,600,000 short tons in July. The 2003/04 total supply projection was increased to 12,068,000 short tons from 11,739,000 short tons from July. Exports were unchanged while domestic uses were increased by 10,000 short tons, resulting in an increase in total use to 10,210,000 short tons from 10,200,000 in July. Ending stocks were increased to 1,858,000 short tons from 1,479,000 in July, resulting in an increase in the stocks-to-use ratio to 18.2 percent from 14.5 percent in July.

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Louisiana
Smoke Management Guidelines for Sugarcane Harvesting

All growers should have attended the Certified Burn Manager Program. The list below are the steps you should take when burning.

Step 1. Identify Smoke Sensitive Areas
Step 2. Obtain Fire Weather Forecast
Step 3. Develop a Prescribed Burn Plan
Step 4. Determine Smoke Category Day
Step 5. Determine Smoke and Ash Screening Distance
Step 6. Determine Direction of Smoke and Ash Plume
Step 7. Evaluate the Prescribed Burn Results
Step 8. Keep good harvest records

If you have misplaced your copy or would like additional copies, contact the League office or your county agent.

The League staff wishes to remind all growers that although these guidelines are voluntary, it is vitally important that burning operations be conducted in as efficient a manner as possible in order to manage smoke and ash and reduce their impact on the public.

The future of cane burning depends upon the successful incorporation of these guidelines into your farming operation.

By Windell Jackson

Planting Update - Crop Report
Variety Advancement Committee Meeting
Bin-Trailer System Update

Planting for 2003 has progressed well in the more northern and western regions of the cane belt. Many growers in these regions are nearing the completion of their planting. There are a few growers that completed their planting before August 15, 2003. At the writing of this article on August 21, 2003, there are a number of others that will complete their planting by the weekend. As was stated, this is true for the northern and western areas, however, as one travels east along US Highway 90 past New Iberia, into St. Mary, Assumption, Terrebonne, and Lafourche parishes, the picture quickly changes. Rain has not only delayed planting, but in many cases there are fields of fallow ground in which growers have not been able to draw rows. The majority of the areas that are hampered by the rain this year are those areas that were plagued by rain during the 2002 planting season. A lot of these same growers were not able to complete their plantings from last year, and are in need of a good planting this year.

Planting ratios are reported to be ranging from 3:1 to 5:1 for mechanically planted, whole stalk seed. For the most part, growers who are planting whole stalk with machines are reporting ratios one or two points on the plus side of 3.5:1. A few growers are reporting ratios slightly over 2:1 from fields that furnish seed cane for the mechanical planting of billeted seed. However, for the majority of growers planting billets with machines, the ratios have been somewhere less than 3.5:1. Even though there are more acres used for seed, the number of growers who are planting billets continues to increase. The main reason sighted by growers for planting billets is the lack of reliable labor. For those who have been able to find labor to plant their fields by hand, the ratios have ranged from 7:1 to near 9:1.

One of the most important keys in producing maximum yields is the planting of disease free seed. For numerous years RSD caused significant yield losses to the Louisiana Sugar Industry. As reported in Dr. Jeff Hoy's article RSD and the Canary in the Coal Mine (which is in this issue of **The Sugar Bulletin**) the industry has made great strides in the reduction of the amount of RSD. To help monitor and reduce the spread of RSD, growers are advised to take advantage of The Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab that is directed by Dr. Jeff Hoy, Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology, LSU Ag Center.

Crop Report

When compared to previous years, the crop height continues to be somewhat short. The lack of height accounts for some of the low planting ratios. However, reports on the populations of fields harvested for seed indicate stands are satisfactory. Most growers, consultants, and other experts agree that the potential yield of the 2003 crop will be greatly increased if the fields remain relatively straight. Even if the crop is harvested with very little lodged cane, the outlook for the crop is for the tonnage to be average. The specter of a wet 2003 harvest is present in the

back of most growers' minds. In black land fields, there are ruts from 2002 that are so deep that it not possible for growers to repair them. With all of the rain during the summer, many of the headlands shattered during the previous year's harvest have not had a chance to dry out and firm up. Because these headlands are still soft, they are rutting with the passing of planting equipment. If growers can get into their fields during dry periods, they should be able to harvest them without too much damage to the fields and their equipment.

Variety Advancement Committee Meeting

The Variety Advancement Committee met on August 13, 2003. It was the decision of the committee that the variety L 97-128 should be replanted and increased to its maximum on the secondary stations. The variety could be released to the industry in the fall of 2004. In plant cane and first stubble outfield tests, L 97 - 128 has produced yields of sugar per acre equal to LCP 85-384. Second stubble data on heavy and light soils will be collected from outfield tests during the 2003 harvest. There have been low levels of smut infestations in L 97-128 in test fields and seed increase stations. These levels have **not** reached a degree of infection that would significantly reduce stands or yields.

The Variety Advancement Committee also decided that Ho 95-988 and L 98-209 should be introduced to the secondary stations for planting this fall. Ho 95- 988 is a variety that was dropped from the seed increase program due to the amount of smut in test fields. However, even though the variety was not included in the seed increase program, yield data was collected. In outfield tests of plant cane through third stubble, Ho 95-988 has maintained yields of sugar per acre that have equaled those of LCP 85-384.

Data for L 98-209 has been collected in plant cane outfield tests: first stubble data will be compiled during the 2003 harvest. Its yields of sugar per acre have equaled those of LCP 85 - 384. If yield data continues to look promising for L 98-209, it could be released in 2005. The amount of seed for each variety will equal that which has been given to secondary stations in previous years and should provide adequate seed if released to the industry.

Other breeding series that were acted upon during the meeting were the 1999, 2000, and 2001. In the 1999 series (after the meeting) there are two varieties remaining that will be replanted in outfield tests this fall. In addition, plant cane data will be collected for outfield tests during the 2003 harvest. The five varieties remaining in the 2000 series will be planted in outfield tests for the first time in 2003 for data collection in 2004. Seed of fifteen new varieties in the 2001 series will be introduced to outfield locations. There are forty two experimental varieties in the 2002 series that are to be replanted by the breeding stations in nursery and infield tests. Of the sixty five experimental varieties in the varying stages of selection, it is still too early to know if there is another variety in their midst that will have the impact of LCP 85-384.

Bin - Trailer System Update

During the 2002 harvest, a new hauling system was tested at the Lula Mill. The system consisted of bins that could be offloaded at a farms loading sight. After the empty bin was removed from the road trailer, a bin filled with cane could then be loaded on the trailer for delivery to the mill. While sitting on the ground at the farm loading sight, the empty bin could be loaded by the grower by his normal infield harvesting equipment for delivery by the same truck and trailer at a later time.

The following information for the 2002 operation of this system at the Lula Sugar Mill was provided by Daniel Mattingly.

> *During the 2002 crop harvest, the system hauled 30,000 tons with one truck and trailer and 6 bins (1 person, 18 tires, 1 brake set). It was used on a farm site that averaged a 10-16 mile round trip from the Lula Sugar Mill. Prior to this season, it took 2 trucks and 4 trailers (2 people, 52 tires, 4 brake sets) to accomplish this haul.*
>
> *At the beginning of the season we had some hydraulic over electric problems, but after the first few days the system went well with only minor problems the rest of the season. It took the operator about 3 days to become very proficient on the system.*

The average weight of the trailer with a bin is 12.3 tons and the truck weight was 9.3 tons averaging 21.6 total tare tons. The average net weight during the season was 26, with lows of 22 and highs of 35 tons. These bins are very easy to load by the farmer. The bins sit like a box on the ground with the top rail at only 8ft high. The tractor driver need only raise his cart high enough to clear his cart tires then dump. The driver can see directly in the bin and can easily pour his load with less waste. In addition, with six bins on the site this farmer did not have to wait on trucking.

On average, it took the hauler 4 minutes to drop an empty bin on the site and lift a full bin. At the mill the truck would back to the cane yard pile and dump his load in 1.5 minutes. The mill needed only to push the pile tighter with the pay loaders. The trucker made an average of 12-16 loads per day in 8-10 hours.

With the new legislation on truck weights coming in 2006, this system can be adaptable. A third axle can easily be added to keep the 100,000 lb permit, or the trailer and bins can be built shorter to bring down the tare weight since less weight will be carried.

We will be running 2 trailers and 20 bins this season on 3 different farm operations. The economics of running fewer trailers and less truckers making more loads, makes better use of equipment. This slows down hauling rates to the mill, while still keeping the farmer's operation moving at his pace with bins provided.

The evaluation of this hauling system will continue during the 2003 harvest and as other information becomes available. It will be passed on. We thank Daniel Mattingly for providing the industry with this update.

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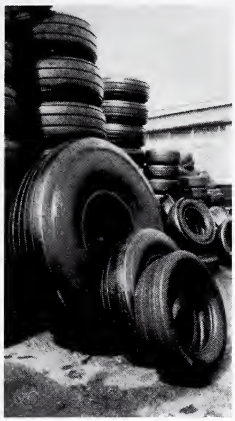

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By Dr. Harold Birkett
Audubon Sugar Institute
Louisiana State University AgCenter

Core Lab Sugar Prediction, Factory Performance and Liquidation Factor

Several growers have inquired how well the core lab predicted the sugar yield for the 2002 crop. Before we answer this question, let us review some history and actual results of previous years.

The core lab method was introduced in Louisiana in 1975. The original formula for predicting the Theoretical Recoverable Sugar (TRS) was based on a simple model that assumed that the juice in the press' residue had the same composition as the juice that was extracted and analyzed. It was recognized that this assumption would lead to an over prediction of the TRS, but since all samples would be over predicted by approximately the same degree, all farmers would be treated similarly and the system would be fair. In 1997, with the advent of substantial quantities of billet cane, the core sample method was evaluated to determine how well it predicted the sugar yield for unburned cane with leaves. This investigation indicated that large quantities of green leaves slightly increased the over prediction of the TRS. As a result, the TRS prediction formula was modified using factors to make the pol and Brix predictions more accurate. The new core formula was introduced at all factories starting with the 1998 crop.

The predicted TRS is based solely on the pol, Brix and fiber (which includes field soil) of the cane. In addition to the cane analysis, the TRS prediction assumes a typical Boiling House Efficiency (BHE) of 96 and a reduced extraction of 91.9.

Ideally, the factory's sugar yield of Commercially Recovered Sugar (CRS) should equal the TRS, or be proportional to the TRS. The liquidation factor is the ratio of the CRS to the TRS expressed as a percent (i.e. Liquidation Factor = CRS x 100/TRS).

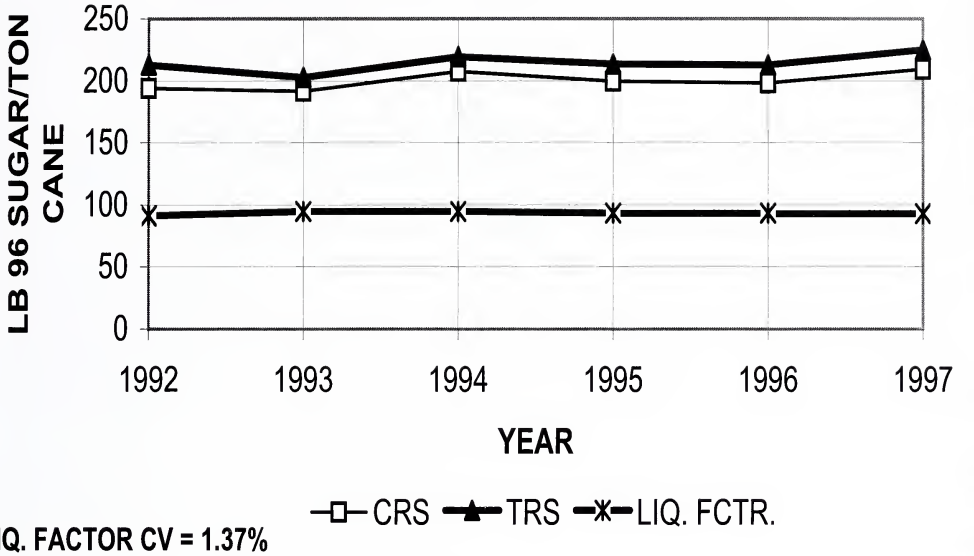
If the core lab's TRS prediction was directly proportional to the factory's CRS, the liquidation factor would be constant. The accuracy of the sugar prediction can thus be gauged by the constancy of the liquidation factor. Figure 1 is a plot of the TRS, CRS and liquidation factors for the 1992-1997 period. During this period the original core lab formula was being used. Of interest is that the TRS and CRS plots track each other well, while the liquidation factor was quite constant. The coefficient of variation of the sugar yield during this period was about 3.5%, while the coefficient of variation of the liquidation factor was 1.37%.

Figure 2 is a plot of the TRS, CRS and liquidation factor for the 1998-2002 period when the new core lab formula was in use. The TRS and CRS track even closer than for the old formula, while the variation in the liquidation factor is less. During this period the annual coefficient of variation in the sugar yield was about 7% (double that of the 1992-1997 period), while the coefficient of variation for the liquidation factor of 1.18% was less than for the 1992-1997 period.

The constancy of the liquidation factor implies that the core lab has accurately predicted factory yields.

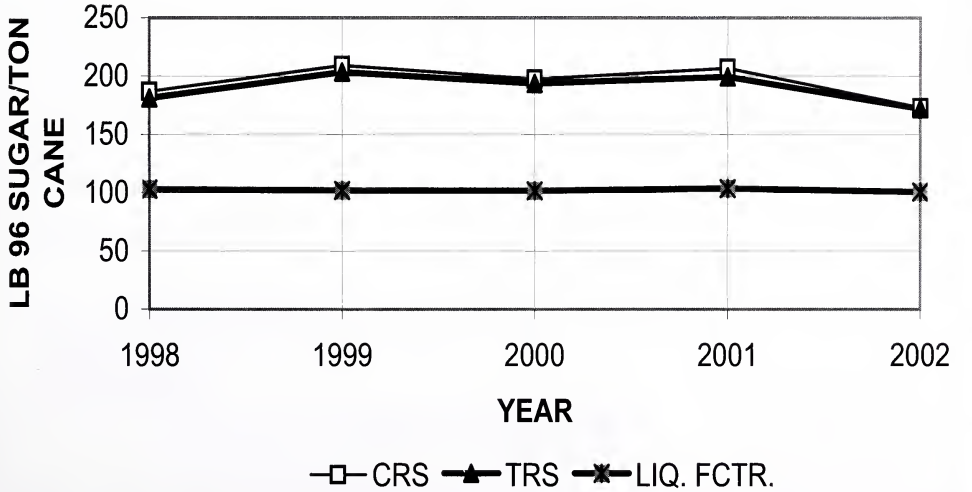
The highest liquidation factor obtained since the new core lab formula was introduced in 1998 was 103.89 in 2001, while the lowest liquidation factor obtained was 100.77 that occurred in

FIG. 1. CRS, TRS & LIQUIDATION FACTOR (1992-1997)



LIQ. FACTOR CV = 1.37%

FIG. 2. CRS, TRS & LIQUIDATION FACTOR (1998-2002)



LIQ. FACTOR CV = 1.18%

Table 1
COMPARISON OF 2001 AND 2002 CROPS

	2001	2002	% Diff.
Factory CRS, lb 96/TC	207.0	173.2	
Corer, TRS, lb 96/TC	199.3	172.1	
Liquidation Factor	103.9	100.8	-3.0
Reduced Extraction	92.5	91.1	-1.6
B.H.E	96.5	93.3	-3.2

2002. Summary results for these two crops are shown in Table 1. It will be noted that compared to 2001, in 2002 the average factory's reduced extraction declined by 1.6%, while the BHE declined by 3.2%. The combination of these declines in factory performance should have led to an even greater decline in the liquidation factor than the 3.0% reported.

Factors that can affect the accuracy of the sugar yield prediction include:

a. Factory efficiencies - which are not accurately known since the factories lack accurate juice and bagasse weighing facilities.
b. Cane washing - the core sampler analyzes **delivered** cane, while the factory processes **washed** cane.
c. Dextran, ash and reducing sugars present in the cane juice, that are not determined in the core lab.

In summary, the core lab's TRS sugar prediction (particularly over the last five years) has been surprisingly accurate under widely varying cane quality and processing conditions.

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THE BATON ROUGE LINE

By Tom Spradley
Spradley and Spradley

Governor's Race Shapes Up

In a Governor's race that starts out oddly without a black candidate and without Edwin Edwards, it seems the voters are less sure of how to vote than ever before. "Undecided" leads all candidates with about 40 percent, and most polls show no candidate has more than 20 percent with just a few weeks to go.

Although there are differences in the polls taken by various groups, the general ranking of candidates at press time for this report show Blanco, Jindal and Ieyoub with double digits. Blanco is usually in the 20 percent category, but Jindal's poll shows him in a statistical dead-heat with her. In the first tier Ieyoub comes in at 10 percent. Leach, Ewing, Downer and Blossman bring up the rear.

But it's too early to bank on those numbers. Only a few of the candidates have been on T.V. and the public debates have not yet begun. Most of the contenders are unknown to nearly half of the voters. (This goes to press the day before the filing deadline and there are two other candidates considering the race.)

Most hopefuls have reason to hope. Kathleen Blanco has a strong regional base in Acadiana and a proven state-wide network. Jindal is moving up faster than anyone else and hasn't started T.V. yet. Ieyoub has the courthouse gang, organized labor and the trial attorneys (read that as money) on his side. Buddy Leach is ten feet tall when he stands on his personal wallet and is willing to spend it. Ewing has a strong base in north Louisiana and Downer is an organized and tireless worker with a regional base.

The last time Louisiana voters were faced with this many choices was in the Treen/ Lambert primary when Sonny Mouton, Bubba Henry, Paul Hardy and several others were reaching for the brass ring. In that race several hundred thousand fewer voters went to the polls in the primary than in the runoff. Too many choices! In the runoff Treen won by less than one vote per precinct.

Things should start to clear up in the next couple of weeks. Who will the blacks vote for; Ieyoub or Leach? Where is the "good ole boy" support going? Can labor deliver the teachers vote which has been resistant to such pressure in the past? Is Kathleen Blanco's support going to stick? Will Foster's support of Jindal carry him to a runoff?

This could be the most suspense we have experienced in a Governor's race in 25 years. Louisiana offers an extremely varied menu for October.

ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

By James F. Coerver, P.E.
G.E.C., Inc.

Dogged By The Dog Days

The "dog days" of 2003 are nearly over. From the environmental perspective, this period has been hot and very uncomfortable.

The term "dog days" refers to the time period encompassing the helical rising of the Dog Star (Sirius), beginning in early July and ending in early September. The term is also a euphemism for a period marked by dull lack of progress. There was no perceptible progress on environmental concerns in general, and much bad, but not entirely unexpected news about air pollution.

The dog days correspond exactly to the period when solar heat input to this latitude is the greatest, the maximum day of solar heat input occurring on or about August 1. This high solar input is great for growing sugar cane, but not for human comfort or for maintaining ambient air quality standards, especially the standard for photochemical oxidants (ozone). The intense sunshine causes ample production of the natural and man-made chemical pre-cursors of ozone which accumulate near ground level during periods of air stagnation occurring frequently in the spring and summer. Ozone is synthesized from the precursors by a complicated photochemical (sunlight actuated) reaction.

Ozone, in high concentrations, is known to cause respiratory distress, and therefore environmentalists have insisted that the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ozone be set at a low level that in many locations is impossible to attain.

One environmental irony is that environmentalists also say that the lack of sufficient ozone in the upper atmosphere is the cause of more intense solar radiation reaching the earth's surface and causing "global warming," yet another environmental/political humbug for discussion at another occasion.

Another irony is the ozone NAAQS itself, setting the maximum hourly ozone concentration in the ambient air (124 parts ozone per billion parts of air by volume) that may be exceeded on no more than four days in a three consecutive year period at any official monitoring station. On the rare occasions when more than 124 ppb of ozone is detected in South Louisiana, the excursion concentration builds up rapidly, stays for only an hour or so, and falls rapidly back into compliance. For anyone that is actually sensitive to such a low concentration of ozone, and very few people are so affected, their exposure in a non-compliant situation could be as little as one hour only on five days in a three

year period. Furthermore, the law requires that when weather favorable for an ozone excursion is forecast, warnings must be published as it is now done faithfully on TV and radio. A sensitive individual may stay indoors on the afternoon of a forecasted "bad air day" and avoid the allegedly harmful ozone exposure entirely.

When I was a youngster, the Florida Parishes of Louisiana from Slidell to Baton Rouge were sparsely populated and covered with pine forests. This area was called "the ozone belt," a shady, comparatively cool and reportedly healthy place for the residents of Baton Rouge and New Orleans to spend their summer leisure time. Ozone was known to be high in the area because of the turpenes emitted in abundance by pine trees and converted to ozone by photosynthesis on sunny days. Live oak trees are also major turpene emitters. The Great Smoky Mountains got its name from the summertime photochemical smog associated with such ozone synthesis. All this was before ozone became a dirty word.

Another natural ozone problem is associated with the intense spring and summer thunderstorms often experienced in Louisiana. Intense thunderstorms usually have an updraft on one side, and a downdraft on the opposite side which can throw cool ozone-laden air from the upper atmosphere down to ground level, causing an ozone excursion if occurring in the vicinity of a monitoring station. Naturally occurring pollutants are known to account for 50 percent of the ozone detected in the ambient air near Baton Rouge. Ten percent of the ozone violations at Baton Rouge can be attributed to ozone transported into the area on wind currents from the Houston-Port Arthur area. The remaining 40 percent of Baton Rouge ozone is from man-made pollutants, mostly those emitted by internal combustion engines (automobiles).

The entire geographic area of the State of Louisiana was brought into full compliance with NAAQS many years ago, except, only ozone in a five-parish area in and around the City of Baton Rouge. Actually, the Baton Rouge non-attainment area had only three days of ozone violation in calendar years 2001 and 2002. All that was needed was to get through 2003 with less than two violation days and the "non-attainment" stigma could be lifted. The early dog days of 2003 had persistently unstable weather preventing any ozone violation and prospects looked good for a while. Unfortunately, atmospheric stagnation on July 18 and again on August 18 caused one-hour violations to occur at a monitoring station in Baton Rouge. This reportedly means that USEPA is obligated to penalize the five-parish area by requiring the use of "reformulated" gasoline beginning in the Spring of 2004.

The really sad thing is that even though EPA says the penalty action is necessary to abate the ozone situation, the fact is using reformulated gasoline has never improved any ozone situation and actually makes it worse as motorists report lower miles per gallon (more gasoline burned per mile traveled). Also there will be more miles traveled to buy the much cheaper gasoline outside the penalty area. There are no environmental benefits – only more ozone and much higher transportation costs.

Do not be deceived into thinking farmers and other businesses outside the five-parish penalty area will be unscathed. Gasoline costs will go up there also due to competition, and the costs of goods and services there will also rise as local jobbers are hit with higher transportation costs.

A lot of valuable time and resources is now being wasted arguing over the true cost of ozone non-compliance. What really needs to be done is to put a final stop to all this sort of "penalty" foolishness which environmentalists and USEPA say is "required" by the U.S. Clean Air Act. If this assertion is true, and the Federal Courts always agree with environmentalists, then the remedy is entirely in the hands of Congress. A clear and urgent message needs to be sent to Congress that no one is asking for environmental "backsliding" – just pull the plug on foolish penalties and on the setting of unnecessarily stringent and/or naturally unattainable ambient air quality standards. We need to "dog" our congressmen on this one!

RSD and the Canary in the Coal Mine

Jeff Hoy, Lori Grelen, and Jane Paccamonti
Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology
LSU AgCenter

We have made great progress in controlling ratoon stunting disease (RSD) in recent years. During 2002, the RSD testing done by the LSU AgCenter Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab found that the average stalk infection level per field was only 1%, and only 5% of tested fields had any RSD infection (see Table 1). In comparison, more than half of the fields tested in 1997 had some RSD infection. This means that RSD had little or no effect on industry yield during 2002. This has been the case for several years now, yet we continue to strongly urge farmers to maintain an active healthy seedcane program. Why?

The reason is we are concerned that, although RSD infection levels may be so low that there is no detectable effect on yield, the disease may be continuing to persist on farms at low levels. The dramatic reductions in RSD have been accomplished through utilization of tissue culture based healthy seedcane programs and widespread cultivation of LCP 85-384, a variety with some resistance to the spread of RSD. Breeding and selecting for resistance to RSD is not currently an objective of the cooperative Louisiana sugarcane breeding program, and in previous varieties, RSD resistance was rare. This means it is likely we will release high-yielding varieties in the future that are susceptible to RSD. We hope to be able to grow these varieties without risk of a resurgence of RSD.

So, is there cause for concern? The statistic for percentage of farms that have at least one field with RSD has shown the slowest decline. Just over half of the tested farms had RSD in 1997. This decreased to one third in 2000, 16% in 2001 and 10% in 2002. The continuing decrease is encouraging. However, the typical stalk sample size collected during testing is only 20 stalks. This sample size makes testing practical and will detect moderate to high infection levels reliably, but it may miss low levels of infection. Is there any way to know if this is taking place?

For many years, coal miners used canaries, that were highly sensitive to poisonous gases, to provide a warning of danger in the mine. HoCP 91-555 is a variety with very high susceptibility to RSD. We strongly encourage farmers to check fields of this variety for RSD on an annual basis. During 2002, 27 fields of HoCP 91-555 were tested, and six (22%) were infected with RSD. This percentage is higher than the overall average field infection percentage (5%) and suggests that RSD may, in fact, be persisting at low levels on some farms. We have previously referred to HoCP 91-555 as a potential RSD "magnet." It also may be serving as a "canary" that warns us of a continued RSD threat.

The Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab has provided monitoring of RSD infection levels in the industry since 1997. A summary of the 2002 testing results is shown in Table 2. Due to the adverse conditions during the harvest season, fewer fields were tested than during previous years. We would like to give special thanks to Mr. Paul Templet, who almost single-handedly conducted the 2002 RSD sampling. Thanks for your hard work under difficult conditions! The

Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab also monitors RSD in the LSU Variety Selection Program and the ASCL Variety Release Program. The purpose is to insure RSD does not interfere in the variety selection process or contaminate cooperators' farms. The lab tests every stalk of cane to be planted at the Primary Stations and spot checks increase plots for RSD. In addition, we provide an independent assessment of the RSD infection status of the Kleentek® seedcane production system. Once again, RSD was not detected in any sample collected from Kleentek seedcane fields. Until now, the Local Quarantine has only been providing healthy plant material to be used in tissue culture seedcane production to Kleentek. During 2002, LCP 85-384 was provided to 3D Chemical Company, and six varieties were provided to Helena Chemical Company.

Monitoring for RSD is very important, since the disease causes no visible external symptoms. The Sugarcane Disease Detection Lab will provide RSD testing for any interested farmer. Your County Agent or crop consultant can collect samples from fields you would like to have checked. Testing will begin in September and continue through the harvest season. There is no lab fee for testing. The League is helping to cover the lab costs for testing, and the salaries of the lab staff are funded by the League and the commercial seedcane companies. We will check any field, but we suggest that you check some of your old stubble fields of cane going to the mill. With the low levels of disease now occurring in the industry, we recommend testing of cane at the end of the healthy seedcane "pipeline." If RSD is still present on a farm, it will be easiest to detect in the old stubble cane. RSD testing requires very little effort and no expense on your part, so we urge you to take advantage of this service.

The removal of RSD as a yield constraint has been a major positive development for the Louisiana sugarcane industry. If farmers will monitor for disease and maintain an active healthy seedcane program, they have the opportunity to eliminate RSD from their farms and prevent its return.

Table 1. RSD field and stalk infection frequencies in different crop cycle years for all varieties combined during 2002.

Crop Year	Total number of fields	Average field infection (%)	Total number of stalks	Average stalk infection (%)
Plant cane	142	4.2	2820	0.6
First stubble	35	11.4	700	2.7
Second stubble	13	0.0	281	0.0
Older stubble	5	0.0	99	0.0
Totals	195	5.1	3900	0.9

Table 2. RSD testing summary for 2002.

Source	Location	No. of fields	No. of varieties	No. of samples
Louisiana growers	State-wide	195	5	3900
LSUAC	St. Gabriel & Iberia	-	5	110
Variety Release Program	1° & 2° stations	-	23	1297
Kleentek®	Foundation stock	-	-	28
Kleentek®	1° increase farms	15	5	336
Kleentek®	2° increase farms	16	3	326
Local Quarantine	LSUAC	-	14	95
Research	LSUAC	-	8	805
Totals		226		6897

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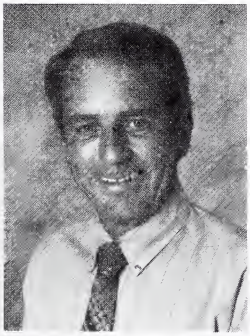

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Dedicated Research Funding Summaries

Scientists who receive funding from the League's Dedicated Research Committee are requested to prepare a short summary of their work at the end of the year. Those reports will be published each month until all of them have been printed. The following are reports from research during the year 2002.

Survey of the Louisiana Sugarcane Industry for New Stalk Borer Pests, *William H. White, Research Entomologist[1]; David Adamski and John W. Brown, Research Entomologists[2]; Juan A. Villanueva-Jimenez[3]; Manuel Mendez Lopez[4]: [1]USDA-ARS-SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA; [2]USDA-ARS, Systematic Entomology Laboratory, National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D.C.; [3]Celogio de Postgraduados, [4]Veracruz, Mexico; Autlan, Mexico*

Last year the ASCL Research Committee supported funding a survey of the Louisiana sugarcane industry for potential new stemborer pests. This survey was prompted by recent reports from Mexico of *Blastobasis graminea*, a stemborer known up until the Mexican reports as a pest only in Columbia and Venezuela. In addition to our concern with *B. graminea* we were alert for other stemborers (i.e. Mexican rice borer) that may also pose a threat to our industry. The resulting survey proved to be very productive as not only did we find *B. graminae*, but other insects of economic importance.

Status and Results of 2002 Project:

The following table lists those insects that we found during our survey and identifies any significance the insect may have to sugarcane or other important crops.

Table 1. Insects found during the 2002 stemborer survey of the Louisiana sugarcane industry

Insect	Host Plant	Collection Method	Number Collected	Economic Importance
Blastobasis	Smooth cordgrass	Plant dissection	13 larvae (8 reared to adults)	uncertain
Sugarcane borer	sugarcane	Plant dissection	51 larvae reared to adult	Key pest of LA sugarcane
D. evanescens	Vaseygrass	Plant dissection	3 larvae reared to adult	non-pest
Assorted stemborers	unknown	Light trap	3 adults	unknown
Other stemborers	unknown	On loan from private collector*	5 adults	unknown
Other moth species	milo	Seed heads	37 adults reared to adults	uncertain (new host records)

* Borrowed from the personal collection of Vernon Breu, Abita Springs, LA.

Sugarcane Pathology Research, *J. W. Hoy, Plant Pathology and Crop Physiology Department: LSU AgCenter*

Progress Report for 2002:

During 2002, major research projects were billet planting and ratoon stunting disease (RSD) testing. Additional projects were screening for resistance to leaf scald, smut, and mosaic as part of the Variety Selection Program; adaptation of methods to detect leaf scald, RSD, and yellow leaf; operation of a local quarantine for healthy plant material to be used for tissue culture seedcane production; assessment of the threat posed by yellow leaf virus; evaluation of alternative control measures for root rot; and evaluation of methods to compare the microbial communities in "new" and "old" cane ground. Only a summary of the results can be reported here. Complete results will be made available in Sugar Bulletin articles on billet planting and RSD testing, and the LSUAC Sugarcane Research Annual Progress Report.

Billet planting experiments were conducted at the Sugar Research Station. They included one second stubble experiment comparing billets and whole stalks with and without starter fertilizer, plant cane and first stubble experiments comparing billet date and rate of planting, and a plant cane experiment comparing billet and whole stalk planting in HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555. Yield differences seen among treatments in plant cane were no longer evident in the second stubble experiment. No yield differences were detected in the plant cane date of planting test; however, an early August planting date was not included. Yield differences were no longer evident in first stubble of the date of planting test. Yields were lower at the lowest planting rates for both planting dates in plant cane. No significant differences were detected among the different planting rates in first stubble. Yields were not obtained from farm experiments due to adverse conditions. HoCP 85-845 and HoCP 91-555 responded well to billet planting plant cane. Stalk population was higher in billet planted HoCP 85-845.

RSD testing was conducted for the sixth year during 2002. Kleentek seedcane production was monitored, and no RSD was detected. RSD also was not detected in the Variety Selection and Release programs. A total of 6,897 samples were tested for RSD. In on-farm testing, 3,900 stalks from 276 fields were tested. Results are not yet available. An experiment comparing rates of spread of RSD caused by combine and whole stalk harvesters in commercial and experimental varieties was harvested for the second time. Results analysis is not yet complete, but it does not appear that combine harvesting spreads RSD any faster the soldier harvesting.

Research is assessing the threat posed by sugarcane yellow leaf virus. Kleentek seedcane sources were monitored (2,327 samples tested), and seedcane was not sold from problem fields. A LCP 85-384 yield loss experiment (with M. Grisham) is in first stubble. Another yield loss test was planted with LCP 85-384 and Ho 95-988. Yellow leaf spread and increase experiments have been established (with C. McAllister and T. Reagan), and a state-wide survey was conducted and is on-going. The 2002 results from 42 fields indicate that the disease now occurs in all areas of the state, but no area has more disease than another does. The highest field level of infection was 63%; however, virus was not detected in approximately half of the fields tested.

Sugarcane is often grown as a monoculture in Louisiana, and root diseases can build-up and reduce yields. A new soil pesticide is being evaluated (with E. McGawley) for root disease control. In a first experiment, the chemical delayed cane germination, and no yield differences were detected. Additional experiments are needed to determine the length of time needed between treatment and planting. Communities of microorganisms in "new" and "old" sugarcane land were evaluated at two sites to determine what changes take place during long-term cultivation of cane.

Screening for resistance to leaf scald, smut, and mosaic was conducted as part of the Variety Selection Program. Rust resistance evaluation was not possible due to low natural infection levels. If a severe rust epidemic occurs during 2003, ratings will be made, and an attempt will be made to determine the yield loss caused by rust in LCP 85-384.

Alternatives to the Use of the Chemical Ripener Polado (Glyphosate) in Enhancing the Yield of Sugar of Louisiana Sugarcane, *Benjamin L. Legendre, Specialist (Sugarcane) & Professor, LSU Ag Center Research & Extension, Sugar Research Station, St. Gabriel, LA; Ken Gravois, Director, & Keith Bischoff, Assistant Professor, LSU Ag Center Research & Extension, Sugar Research Station, St. Gabriel, LA; Jim Griffin, Professor, Department of Agronomy, LSU Ag Center Research & Extension, Baton Rouge, LA*

Progress Research for 2002:

Seventeen ripener treatments were applied on September 4, 2002 to the stubble crop of the variety LCP 85-384. Because of Tropical Storm Isadore and Hurricane Lili, all cane was severely lodged. Sampling of all plots was done at 37 days after treatment (DAT). All plots were then harvested by cane combine and plot weights were obtained on October 23 (49 DAT), 2002; however, because of tremendous variability in plot weights due to the lodged conditions and field soil in harvested cane there were no differences in yield of cane per acre amongst treatments. At 37 DAT, 12 of the treatments to include A13013A at both rates, Arsenal at both rates, Palisade at the higher rate, Polado at 4, 6, and 8 oz rate, Polado at the 6 oz rate with Takeup and Touchdown at the three rates tested had significantly higher yields of theoretical recoverable sugar per ton of cane (TRS/TC) when compared to the control (nontreated) plots. No differences were noted in TRS/TC for Accent, Kayphol, MON 37500, Oust at the rates tested and Palisade at the low rate tested when compared to the control plots. The same responses were also noted in sucrose content for all treatments tested. Further, there was a similar response in purity for all treatments with the exception that A13013A at both rates, Palisade at the higher rate and Polado at the lowest rate tested (4 oz). There was no difference in mean stalk weight when compared to the control plots. At 49 DAT, only Accent, Kayphol and MON 37500 failed to increase TRS/TC, sucrose content and purity. Again, there was no difference amongst treatments for mean stalk weight. Of all the treatments tested it appeared that the best response at 37 DAT was obtained from Arsenal at either rate, Polado at the 6 and 8 oz rate, Polado at the 6 oz rate plus Takeup and all rates of Touchdown. At 49 DAT, it appeared that the best treatments were the two rates of A13013A, Polado at all three rates, Polado with Takeup and the three rates of Touchdown. Touchdown is another formulation of glyphosate that seemingly has promise as a ripener while Arsenal continues to show promise as an alternative ripener to glyphosate. Further, it is promising to see yet another compound, A13013A, have potential as a chemical ripener. Stand counts will be made in the spring to determine impact on subsequent stubble crop.

In another test where ripener treatments were applied on August 21, Arsenal at two rates gave comparable results as Polado at 6 oz while Fusilade at two rates showed a significant increase in TRS/TC over control but the response was not as good as what was found with Arsenal at both 35 and 49 DAT. Again there were no differences in yield of tons of cane per acre because of the tremendous variability amongst treatments at harvest by combine due to poor harvest conditions and field soil in harvested cane. This was a repeat study where the same treatments were superimposed on the plots. It is interesting to note that the plots receiving the two Arsenal treatments in 2001 had an average of 4,827 more stalks per acre at harvest in 2002 than the control plots. Even without the ripener treatments in 2002, the Arsenal treated plots from 2001 would have had higher yields of sugar per acre than the control plots because of the higher population. It is also interesting to note that the Polado treated plots had the same stalk population per acre as the control plots when treated in 2001 and harvested at 49 DAT. Stand counts will be taken again in 2003 to determine if this trend continues for both the Arsenal and Polado treatments.

No new data were obtained for betaine during 2002, as the source of the product was not located until too late in the year to make the application.

Economic Analysis of Sugarcane Production in Louisiana, *Dr. Michael E. Salassi, Professor, Dept. of Agricultural Economics & Agribusiness, 101 Ag. Adm. Bldg., LSU Agricultural Center, Baton Rouge, LA, 70803-5604*

Progress Report for 2002:

Annual production costs: Projected sugarcane production costs for 2003 were estimated at $402 per farm acre for production through harvest of third stubble. These costs include expenses for fallow field operations, seedbed preparation, planting, plantcane and stubble crop field operations and harvest. General farm overhead expenses were estimated at $71 per acre. Based on average yields in the range of 30 to 35 tons per acre, total production and overhead cost per pound of sugar produced was estimated to be $0.198 per pound for a one-fifth share arrangement and $0.190 per pound for a one-sixth share arrangement.

Hauling weight options: Evaluated sugarcane truck and trailer weight options for the ASCL State Legislative Committee concerned with the issue of hauling weights in excess of the legal limits and exploring alternatives/options that might allow current hauling weights to continue on all highways. Cost and payload of existing side dump truck and trailer hauling system was estimated. Estimated increase in the number of truckloads required to haul crop were estimated at a 30% increase at the 86,600 weight limit (current special harvest season permit, non-interstate) and a 40% increase at the 83,400 weight limit (current special harvest season permit, interstate). Purchase cost and impacts of truck and trailer weight differences were evaluated for three hauling alternatives: (1) addition of extra axle to existing trailers, (2) use of lighter trucks and different trailer types, and (3) use of a roll-off bin delivery system.

Combine speed study: Worked with ASCL agronomists on a study, which evaluated the impact of combine forward speed on cane quality. Data for the study was collected from tests conducted at Alma in 2001. Two basic questions, which the study was attempting to answer, were: (1) can improved cane quality be achieved by operating combines at a slower forward speed? and (2) is cane quality improved enough to justify the additional expense incurred? The value of improved cane quality was compared to the increased costs of harvesting at slower speeds. Three general conclusions were developed from this one-year study. Improved cane quality was achieved by harvesting at a slower forward speed, but harvest rates were drastically reduced. Although quality cane deliveries are encouraged by the present system, this data indicates that more incentives are needed to cover expenses incurred by the grower. Additional adjustments in fan speed and forward speed as well as combine improvements are likely to continue to enhance cane quality.

Status of Sugarcane Mosaic in the Louisiana Industry, *Michael P. Grisham, Research Plant Pathologist; Yong-Bao Pan, Research Plant Molecular Geneticist; William H. White, Research Entomologist; Thomas L. Tew, Research Geneticist; John C. Veremis, Research Geneticist: USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

The use of resistant varieties is the only effective means of controlling mosaic, smut, leaf scald, and, probably, yellow leaf syndrome. Although the currently recommended varieties are resistant or have a high level of tolerance to mosaic, smut, and leaf scald, screening progeny of crosses in the breeding program continues to be a necessity. Also of high importance is the screening of basic and commercial parental material. With the increased number of diseases for which screening is required, more efficient methods are needed to conduct these tests. A variety that is found to be susceptible to one of the major diseases at the final stages of the breeding program and has to be eliminated represents a significant loss of resources. Variability among the smut and leaf scald pathogens appears to be low; however, the viruses that cause mosaic have been shown to be capable of developing new strains throughout the 20th Century and we can expect the potential for new strains to continue in the future.

Status of Results of the 2002 Project:

Portions of this proposal are applications of results from earlier studies supported by the ASCL. Strains of the mosaic virus were found to be infecting varieties not apparently susceptible to the predominant strains that have been recovered during the past decade. At the present time these new strains have not threatened the varieties currently grown, but have contributed to the removal of some clones from the variety selection program. The successful development of inoculation protocols for the YLS virus is allowing us to screen clones for susceptibility and recommend varieties for use as parents. The screening of progeny from a self-pollinated LCP 85-384 with two different strains of the mosaic virus has yielded progeny that are susceptible in contrast to the parent variety that is resistant. The genetics of the susceptible and resistant progeny are being compared in an attempt to identify genes for resistance that can be use as genetic markers for selecting progeny for advancement in the breeding program.

Evaluation of High Biomass Cultivars, *Thomas Tew, Research Geneticist[1]; John Veremis, Research Geneticist[1]; Edwis Dufrene, Agronomist[1]; Donnie Garrison, Agronomist[1]; Gillian Eggleston, Research Chemist[2]; William White, Research Entomologist[1]; Ed Richard, Research Leader[1]: [1] USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA; [2] USDA-ARS, SRRC, New Orleans, LA.*

Very few agricultural commodities have the enormous potential that high biomass cane has in converting sunlight energy to usable chemical energy, or that has a more favorable energy input/output ratio. In Louisiana, a reorientation of cane management to harness its total biomass potential has not generally occurred. Yet, looking around, breeding and selecting canes for total biomass potential has become a mainstream effort in several countries, most notably within Central and South America. In addition to the use of cane fiber as a source of boiler fuel, advances in industrial biotechnology also offer potential opportunities for higher-value economic utilization of sugarcane bagasse and leafy trash. The fibrous residue material in sugarcane is rich in organic content and low in ash content. It can serve as an ideal substrate for microbial processes for the production of value added products within such categories as liquid fuel, fiber, feed, food, and pharmaceuticals. An increased interest in the total biomass value of cane is inevitable in Louisiana with sugar prices tending to remain low, energy prices rising, the threat of acreage reductions within the industry due to proportionate shares, public pressure increasing to stop burning in cane fields, and the abundance of marginal land in South and Central Louisiana.

Accessions within *S. spontaneum, Erianthus, and Miscanthus,* when crossed with commercial-type sugarcane cultivars, produce progeny with greatly improved vigor, stalk population, ratooning ability, hardiness and resistance to diseases and insects. Historically, progeny from these crosses have been backcrossed for several generations to bring sucrose and fiber contents within acceptable limits. With total biomass potential as the primary goal, and a greater interest in fiber, it should be possible to select commercial-type biomass cane candidates at the earliest generation (wild by commercial) and early backcross generations where the greatest levels of vigor are expected.

Status and Results of 2002 Project:

Yield test results for the plant crop were obtained at Diamond W Ranch at Welsh, LA and on a heavy soil at the USDA Ardoyne Research Farm. Mean results showed that among the seven cultivars evaluated, LCP 85-384 ranked first in recoverable sugar yield; however, it ranked second in total sugar yield (based on Brix %) and sixth in total biomass yield. Total sugar and fiber yields of Ho 00-961 were the most impressive among the energy cane candidates in the plant crop. Ho 00-961 is an early-generation basic-derivative cane.

Cracking the Tough Nuts, *William H. White, Research Entomologist: USDA-ARS, SRRC Sugarcane Research Unit*

It is well established that the Louisiana sugarcane industry is unique among the world's sugarcane industries. The temperate zone that our cane is grown creates many problems that are encountered here and nowhere else. These are problems that must be overcome if our growers and processors are to remain profitable. One particular condition unique to our climatic zone is the absence of ecological stability in our cane fields.

Ecological stability means that a state of equilibrium exists between insects pests and their natural enemies such that natural enemies are always present in high enough numbers to keep important pests in check. Ecological stability is present elsewhere in the cane world, but absent here. Because of this instability, successful management of the borer in our industry depends upon an IPM approach which includes the use of insecticides. Other sugarcane industries frequently seem to get by with only one tactic, biological control. Unfortunately our dependency on insecticides contributes to our ecological instability.

One tough nut that we have to crack is how to overcome this instability and more cost effectively manage our borer. We have two reasonable options. One is to preserve what stability we do have and the second is to enhance that stability through artificial means. We can preserve stability by reducing our dependency on insecticides through the use of resistant varieties and more effective use of biological control. We also can create stability artificially through habitat manipulation. The latter is more theoretical while the former is well proven but requires a long term commitment .

Status and Results of 2002 Project:

Presently, we have had more success with developing new borer resistant parental lines. Every year new assignments are made of additional elite borer resistant varieties, varieties that are used for crossing in both the USDA and LSU variety programs. All of these varieties will be available for crossing next year. In addition to these varieties, we are also crossing with US 90-18. Although US 90-18 is no longer considered a highly resistant variety it has been an exceptional parent over the years and we continue to find high borer resistance in its progeny. Our work with Cotesia has been less productive, but we are learning important information on aspects of the parasite's behavior that will help us to find it's place in our industry. From previous league funded research, we have identified Cotesia's inability to effectively parasitize first-generation sugarcane borer larvae as the reason for its failure to become established in our fields.

Upgrade and Support for the USDA-ARS Juice Quality Laboratory at the Ardoyne Farm, *Ed Richard, Jr., Research Leader/Location Coordinator: USDA-ARS, SRRC, Sugarcane Research Unit, Houma, LA*

The function of the USDA, ARS, Sugarcane Research Unit's (SRU) Juice Quality Laboratory is to support the research efforts of the Louisiana sugarcane industry by conducting analyses of sugarcane samples obtained by the cooperating entities listed above for cane and juice quality. The lab processes on average 6,485 (1998-2002) samples each year. In addition, it provides raw materials for use by others conducting juice quality research and serves as a testing facility for new procedures for juice preparation and analysis. The majority of these samples continue to be received from scientists involved in the Louisiana varietal development program.

As scientists are becoming increasingly interested in treatment/varietal effects on the parameters affecting theoretical sugar recoveries, we have seen of late an increase in the number of samples that are subjected to the core/press method of juice analysis. Because of the multitude of sample preparation steps, this process is slower and requires at least one additional employee the prebreaking, subsample weighing, and the expressing of the juice with the hydraulic sample press. Currently,

technicians can process about 20 samples per hour with the primary constraint being "press time". The additional constraint is the drying of the filter cakes. Typically the 300 - 500 gram filter cake is dried for 48 hours. This constraint was partially offset by the purchase of a third forced air oven by the Dedicated Funding Committee in 2000. Each oven can hold approximately 100 samples. Some scheduling can also help to insure that each day a mixture of samples for both the prebreaker/press and the roller mill are being processed and at least one oven is empted. In the future, and as the number of samples for prebreaker/press analysis increases, alternate procedures for detecting moisture levels in the filter cake or the use of smaller samples and/or reduced drying times may have to be explored.

Status and Results of 2002 Project:

The juice lab processed a total of 6,481samples during the 2002 harvest season with 3,351 (52%) of the samples being subjected to the prebreaker/press method of analysis. Integration of new computer software and improvements in automation increases the efficiency of technicians by minimizing errors during data entry and transcription and provides a data base for statistical analyses for the 10 to 15 Federal, State, cooperator, and industry scientists who use the facility. An increase in the facility's floor space will further increase the output and efficiency of the service to the industry.

Losses of Sucrose to Dextran, and Factory Application of Dextranase *Dr. Gillian Eggleston, USDA-SRRC, New Orleans, LA*

Useful information on the status of dextranase applications in Louisiana was gained by mailing a two page questionnaire/survey to all LA factories in the summer of 2002. A good response from 11 factories was received. Overall, three enzymes were being used in Louisiana: 1) Magnazyme™ by Protech, 2) PCS 355 LDX ™ by Midland, and 3) Eenzy Dex ™ by Especialidades Enzymaticas. Most enzyme applications were in the last evaporator bodies at very low ppm levels (usually less than 10ppm). All applications varied considerably with each factory.

Two methods for determining the relative specific activity of commercial dextranases were used, and the correlation between the two was excellent (R^2=0.999) which confirms their accuracy. All the relative activities were further confirmed with ion chromatography results. Variation existed amongst the enzymes currently being used in Louisiana and others available in the U.S. One method to determine the relative activity of the dextranases was a simple titration method which uses no sophisticated equipment and could be easily undertaken at factories. If any factory is interested in using this method please contact Gillian Eggleston at gillian@srrc.ars.usda.gov.

Temperature is known to have a critical effect on the activity of dextranases. Studies were undertaken in the laboratory on temperature effects, and this was monitored by the foolproof and accurate technique of ion chromatography. Most last evaporators, where many factories were adding the dextranase have temperatures around 150°F, but enzyme activity has dropped off dramatically at this temperature. This, compounded with the high Brix levels that are known to inhibit dextranase action, strongly suggests that the last evaporator may not be the best place to add dextranase in Louisiana. The initial factory studies that we have conducted have also indicated that dextranase application in the evaporators is not working properly. Further studies on this are being continued. Dextranases studied showed maximum activity between 110 130°F. Many factories are now adding dextranase in juice tanks where the temperatures are lower than 100°F, but dextranase activity is still relatively low at such temperatures. It may be necessary to heat juice tanks up to the optimum temperature range to get the most out of the dextranases in Louisiana, and we are continuing these studies.

In the 2002 grinding season, initial factory applications of different dextranases were studied at three factories. Results of viscosity and dextran reductions by added dextranases were inconclusive.

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4 Used High Dump Wagons, walking beam axles - 18.4x30 inch wheels, good condition - $13,000 each; **New 10 Ton High Dump Sugar Cane Wagons.** For information call Bill Fagg at (337) 302-4430 or (337) 734-4558. After hours call (337) 893-6001.

1997 Cameco Chopper Harvester - $78,000; **(2) 1997 Cameco 10 ton Wagons** hydraulic dump - $13,500 each; **12' Davis Planter wagon** converted to 3-row Billet Planter - $12,500; **(6) 1991 Freightliner** Cab over, salvage; 11" Detroit 60 series, good engine, transmissions, and cabs, make offer. Call (337) 945-7812 day or (337) 879-2494 night.

2 Reynolds 14-C Dirt buckets with electric controls and tractor master control - $28,000; 1 **JD 690B track mounted excavator** with pilot controls and 2 buckets - $16,500.00. Call Sam Pearce at (318) 346-2166 (home) or (318) 201-5790 (mobile).

1982 Cameco Two-row Harvester - cab & air - excellent condition - $20,000 or best offer; **3-row Row Marker** - $1,000; **3-row Lilliston Cultivator** - $800; **Amco 15ft. off set heavy duty disc** - $4,000; **10ft. Chisel Plow** - $500; **18ft. Hydraulic Do-All** - $800; **Cameco Diret Haul Tandem Wagon** - $1,500; **Cameco Direct Haul Single Axle Wagon** - $1,000; **2-drum Cane Planters** - $1,500; **3-Push Back Planters Aid** - $450 to $1,000. Call John Falcon at (225) 473-6162 (home) or (225) 717-0296 (mobile).

WANTED: Cane Grab for L-16 (J & L) Loader. Just the grab. Call Malcolm at (337) 319-0574.

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT CLASSIFIED ADS

Classified ads in *The Sugar Bulletin* are for dues paying growers only. There is no charge for these classifieds. However, the guidelines are as follows:

1. Ads must be typed and mailed to The Sugar Bulletin, P. O. Drawer 938, Thibodaux, LA 70302-0938 no later than the 12th day of the month prior to the issue date in which it will be placed.

2. There will be a 10 item limit with only farm equipment listed.

3. Ads will be placed for two months at a time only. If you wish to run for another two months, please call the League office at (985) 448-3707 prior to the due date.

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